Carrot, Stick, or Sledgehammer: US Policy Options for North Korean Nuclear Weapons

Daniel J. Orcutt

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

***Daniel J. Orcutt**, Major, US Air Force, is a White House Fellow for 2004-2005. He is a distinguished graduate of the US Naval Academy, where he also completed exchange programs in Spain and at the US Air Force Academy. He was commissioned into the Air Force, and has flown both the KC-10 and F-15E aircraft. He was selected as the Air Combat Command Daedalian Exceptional Pilot of the Year for 2000. He served at the Korean Air Operations Center in its strategy division during the increase in tension addressed in this paper. He recently completed a Master of Arts in Security Studies (Defense Decision-Making and Planning) at the Naval Postgraduate School where he completed this thesis.*

Comments pertaining to this paper are invited; please forward to:

Director, USAF Institute for National Security Studies
HQ USAFA/DFES
2354 Fairchild Drive, Suite 5L27
USAF Academy, CO 80840
phone: 719-333-2717
fax: 719-333-2716
email: inss@usafa.af.mil

Visit the Institute for National Security Studies home page at
http://www.usafa.af.mil/inss

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FOREWORD

We are pleased to publish this fifty-sixth volume in the *Occasional Paper* series of the United States Air Force Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). In this paper Dan Orcutt, a bright young military officer with a keen analytical mind, examines perhaps the most difficult, often intractable proliferation challenge facing the United States and key Northeast Asia regional allies today: the North Korea nuclear challenge. The strengths of his analysis are the use of a fairly comprehensive, structure, and systematic framework that measures policy options against several of the most important criteria for both diplomacy and broader arms control and counterproliferation efforts. The end result, regardless of your agreement or disagreement with the paper's conclusions, is a paper that provides a solid foundation for planning for a range of actions and outcomes: military support to coercive diplomacy, contingency planning, arms control compliance monitoring and verification, or weapons search and program elimination. We therefore commend the paper for its methodology, its analysis, and its operational utility. It also stands as testament to the quality product of the recently implemented USAF Intermediate Development Education program where select officers attend programs such as the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) for their intermediate professional military education experience. INSS is proud to partner with NPS in supporting this developmental experience.

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JAMES M. SMITH
Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons has shaken the foundations of US policy in Northeast Asia. Because of North Korea's record of state-sponsored terrorism, illicit activities, human rights violations, arms sales, and fiery rhetoric, its development of operational nuclear weapons is deeply disturbing. Although most agree that North Korea should not possess nuclear weapons, nobody has a simple solution. This thesis evaluates three US policy options for the North Korean nuclear crisis: incentive-based diplomacy, coercive diplomacy, or military force. It analyzes them according to four criteria: the impact on North Korea's nuclear weapons, the impact on its neighbors (China, Japan, and South Korea), US policy costs, and the precedent for future proliferation. This thesis shows that diplomacy will fail to achieve US objectives for three reasons. First, neither the United States nor North Korea trust one another following decades of aggression and the demise of the 1994 Agreed Framework. Second, Kim Jong-il will not permit the extensive inspections that the United States demands to increase transparency. Third, multilateral coercive diplomacy is difficult, time-consuming, and not supported by Washington's regional partners. Ultimately, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's question must be answered: "What price is the United States willing to pay to disarm North Korean nuclear weapons?" If Washington is not willing to follow through with the threat of military force, it should not risk coercive diplomacy. Likewise, US leaders may need to decide between maintaining the US-ROK alliance and eliminating North Korean nuclear weapons.

CARROT, STICK, OR SLEDGEHAMMER: US POLICY OPTIONS FOR NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS

INTRODUCTION

North Korea has been a vexing US foreign policy problem since 1950. Pyongyang has sought to develop a nuclear capability for over forty years and in September 2003 declared its possession of nuclear weapons.[1] The current crisis can trace its roots to five distinct events: President Bush's "Axis of Evil" comment in his 2002 State of the Union address, the new US National Security Strategy, the US global war on terrorism, the demise of the Agreed Framework, and North Korea's revelation of its possession of nuclear weapons. In February 2004, President Bush described the situation as follows:

> In the Pacific, North Korea has defied the world, has tested long-range ballistic missiles, admitted its possession of nuclear weapons, and now threatens to build more. Together with our partners in Asia, America is insisting that North Korea completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programs.[2]

A typical policy debate proceeds with a claim that North Korea's latest game of brinkmanship is just another attempt to gain aid for bad behavior, and that there should be no more deals with North Korea. Opponents of taking a hard line with North Korea highlight US failures to comply with portions of the 1994 Agreed Framework and to the unimaginable devastation that a second Korean war could cause. While most agree on the desire for a nuclear free North Korea, no one has a simple solution.

There are four general policy options available to the United States: incentive-based diplomacy, coercive diplomacy, military force, or acceptance of a nuclear North Korea. What is the best US

policy option to achieve our objectives? Diplomacy is the first step toward conflict resolution, and its success would eliminate the need for more aggressive policies that could lead to war. But is a diplomatic solution possible for such a difficult issue, especially when neither party appears willing to compromise? In light of President Bush's February remarks, the assumption is that America will not accept a nuclear-armed Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Accordingly, this thesis compares and contrasts the remaining three policy options with respect to four evaluation criteria and evaluates each policy's chance for success.

Incentive based diplomacy, such as security guarantees or energy and economic aid in exchange for nuclear disarmament without a threat of force, will most likely fail to remove North Korean nuclear weapons completely, verifiably, and irreversibly. Although relatively inexpensive and enthusiastically supported by regional partners, it will fail for three key reasons. First, US reluctance to pursue another incentive-only type policy following the demise of the 1994 Agreed Framework may remove this policy option even prior to opening dialogue. Second, North Korea has repeatedly refused to allow high levels of transparency as required by any future diplomatic policy options. Finally, North Korea's tough negotiating tactics indicate a reluctance to accept an offer without pushing for more concessions, especially absent any threat of negative repercussions for non-compliance.

Next along the spectrum of conflict resolution comes coercive diplomacy, such as threatening North Korea with economic sanctions or military force unless it surrenders its nuclear weapons program by a certain deadline. But coercive diplomacy's track record of success and its prospects for North Korea are bleak.

Similar to an incentive based policy, transparency and its requisite verification regime are problematic for North Korea. In addition, US coercive diplomacy has a low success rate and is more difficult to execute successfully in a multilateral environment.[3] Finally, North Korean leaders are able to insulate themselves from the desired effects of coercion. Failure is virtually guaranteed unless properly targeted carrots are offered.

A second Korean war could be won by Combined Forces Command (CFC) that would provide the highest level of control over North Korean nuclear weapons; however, its costs are excessive, and US regional partners oppose the use of force to resolve the crisis. Seoul and Tokyo are immediately at risk to North Korean artillery and ballistic missiles, respectively. The American public does not perceive a significantly high enough threat from North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons to spend billions and endure military losses in the tens of thousands.[4]

Delays in disarming North Korea's nuclear weapons provide its leaders time to increase their stockpile. It is time for the six party talks to produce tangible results. If not, the United States needs to apply just enough stick to convince North Korean leaders that the carrots being offered are more palatable than a sledgehammer. Presented with the examples of Libya or Iraq, which policy option would North Korea prefer? Is this a valid comparison or are the strategic situations radically different? Should coercion fail, the United States must be ready to follow through on its threat of military action to disarm North Korea of its nuclear weapons completely.

The Epicenter of Northeast Asia

The Korean Peninsula is the geopolitical epicenter of Asia. Five of the top fourteen economic powers and four of the ten largest armies in the world are within 600 miles of each other. Seoul and Pyongyang are 111 nautical miles apart, separated by the most heavily armed area on the planet.[5] The Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ) divides two countries that are not at peace, but rather co-exist under a 1953 armistice that has witnessed thousands of violations and hundreds of deaths. Like other epicenters, Korea rumbles periodically: the 1968 USS Pueblo seizure, the 1994 nuclear crisis, and the DPRK's recent declaration that it possesses nuclear weapons all sent shockwaves through the region. The magnitude of the fault lines linking the United States, China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, and Russia are enormous and span political, cultural, economic, and military categories. Note the sizable differences in gross domestic product, economic growth, and military force depicted in Table 1.

US vital interests in the region include 500,000 citizens, 100,000 troops, and $500 billion in annual trade.[6] Maintaining security and stability is paramount to US, Chinese, South Korean, and Japanese interests. However, regional stability continues to be problematic.

One example of instability in the region is North Korea's relations with Japan. Japan's brutal colonization of Korea from 1910 to 1945 left indelible marks on Korean society. North Korea's extensive methamphetamine trafficking and its acknowledgement that it kidnapped Japanese citizens for two decades heightened an already troubled relationship. Pyongyang is 700 nautical miles from Tokyo—mere minutes of missile flight time. North Korea's

Table 1: Selected Comparison of the Six-Party Talk Countries.[7]

Country	PPP GDP US $	World Rank	Growth Rate 1960 - 2000	Total Active Mil Troops	Mil Expen in US $	Mil Spending % GDP	2002 Population
USA	10.1 T	1	3.10%	1,396,200	276.7B	3.20%	288.3 M
China	5.7 T	2	9.40%	2,200,000	55.9B	4.30%	1.28 B
Japan	3.2 T	3	6.80%	234,000	39.5 B	1.00%	127.1 M
DPRK	22 B	99	#	1,173,000	5.2B	11 - 33.9% ^	22.5 M
ROK	784 B	14	10.30%	672,000	13.1B	2.80%	47.6 M
Russia	1.1 T	10	?	1,010,000 *	NA	NA	144 M

Legend
PPP GDP = Purchasing Power Parity Gross Domestic Product
? = Unknown : NA = Not available
= Negative Growth 9 years from1990 - 1998, positive since 1999 approx 1% each yr
* = Soviet Troop Strength includes Strategic Rocket Forces
^ = low of 11% (’03 Janes North Korea country profile) to a high of 33.9% (CIA worldfactbook ’03)

proximity to Japan provides opportunity, its missiles provide a threat, and its public statements display hostile intent. North Korea's threat to turn Tokyo into a "sea of fire" caused Japanese Diet Member Mr. Shingo Nishimura to comment: "there is no bigger threat than that."[8] With hundreds of missiles, including No Dong missiles with an 800-mile range, North Korea can strike all countries in Northeast Asia.[9] In addition, North Korea's September 1998 Taepo Dong I test demonstrated over 1,000 mile range along with multi-stage missile capability.[10] Japan showed considerable restraint following the missile test, but Northeast Asia is rumbling again following the complete breakdown of the Agreed Framework, the new US National Security Policy, and North Korea's withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Assumptions

What are US policy goals and constraints? The United States is committed to preventing Kim Jong-il from using, threatening to use, or selling nuclear weapons. In accomplishing this objective, US policy options are constrained by key regional partners. For example, US State Department officials refer to the three "No's" that China and the United States agreed upon with respect to common goals for North Korea: no nuclear weapons, no war, no collapse. In developing alternative strategies for resolving the current crisis, however, strategists should not rule out any policy option prior to submission for debate, selection, and approval. In addition, if the United States will not accept a nuclear-armed North Korea and diplomacy ultimately fails, how should the United States proceed? For these reasons, it is essential to consider military force. The basis for eliminating accepting North Korean nuclear weapons as a policy option are President Bush's numerous statements

reflecting his desire to protect the United States from the Axis of Evil, his policy preference for action versus inaction, and his personal distaste for Kim Jong-il.[11]

Policy Goals. US policy objectives for North Korean nuclear weapons include complete, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament.[12] At the heart of any solution will be a verification mechanism that must meet the requirements of the United States, North Korea, and the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA). But, North Korea's difficulty in accepting even low levels of transparency was apparent in its April 2004 handling of the train disaster near Ryongchon. With its self-reliance ideology known as *juche*, North Korea has several reasons for remaining isolated. When negotiating with North Korea, one must not forget the country's outrageous track record of violating international norms. Consider the following short list:

- 1968 Seizure of USS Pueblo, held the crew of 82 for 11 months;
- Three assassination attempts on South Korean Presidents ('68, '74, '83);
- November 1987 bombing of KAL flight 858, killing 115 innocent people;
- 1976, two US Officers clubbed to death in DMZ tree cutting detail;
- 2001, DPRK sold approximately $580 million worth of ballistic missiles to the Middle East alone;[13]
- Although no evidence of selling WMD, DPRK sold ballistic missiles to Egypt, Iran, Libya, Pakistan, Syria, and Yemen;[14]
- 2002, DPRK admitted to kidnapping Japanese citizens in the 1970's-1980's;
- Since 1976, trafficking narcotics, other criminal activity, and passing counterfeit US notes resulted in the

> apprehension of DPRK officials over 50 times in 20 countries.[15]

The United States cannot permit a country with North Korea's record of state-sponsored terrorism, human rights violations, and arms sales to possess and threaten the use or sale of nuclear weapons.

Why did North Korea toil for four decades to develop nuclear weapons? Some strategists argue that in order to formulate precise policy, it is necessary to understand North Korea's motivation for building nuclear weapons. Blackmail, black-market, deterrence, or detonation is an easy memory aid to describe four potential explanations. North Korea may intend to blackmail the United States into providing security guarantees, humanitarian aid, or energy assistance by threatening to detonate or sell its nuclear weapons. North Korea's foremost policy goal is regime survival. Accordingly, the most logical explanation for its pursuit of nuclear weapons is to deter what it perceives to be a US desire to overthrow its government with military force. The risk of selling or using its nuclear weapons is what spurs the United States into action.

Constraints. In light of blowback from perceived US unilateral action in Iraq and the vital interests of regional partners, the United States must follow a multilateral approach in its conduct of Northeast Asia policy. The United States cannot afford to alienate China while attempting to coerce North Korea. From a pragmatic standpoint, China's military and economic strength poses a significant obstacle if it disagrees with US policy. In fact, China is in a position to help. China's significant leverage over North Korea stems from its coal and oil exports which comprise approximately 80 percent of North Korea's energy resources.[16]

North Korea's military forces and ballistic missiles also hold major South Korean and Japanese cities at risk. Seoul's metropolitan area of over 19 million is well within range of thousands of artillery pieces, and Tokyo's metropolitan area of 31 million has been threatened by North Korean rhetoric (e.g., the "sea of fire" remark) and military capabilities (e.g. the 1998 Taepo Dong I missile test over Japan). South Korea's partnership with the United States has long been viewed as the center of gravity. North Korea intends to divide and the United States struggles to maintain the Washington–Seoul partnership. The January 1998 inauguration of former South Korean President Kim Dae Jung limited the US policy options. Kim's Sunshine Policy encouraged dialogue, reconciliation, and confidence building between the two Koreas. South Korea's current president, Roh Moo-hyun, met with President Bush in May 2003, and their very limited "agreement on further steps" to resolve the nuclear crisis had the roar of a butterfly. Finally, although President Bush enjoyed an approval-rating surge for firm leadership following the attacks of 11 September 2001, he is constrained by 2004 reelection concerns and questions regarding pre-war intelligence on Iraq in pursuing a more vigorous policy against Pyongyang.

Measures of Policy Comparison

To compare and contrast policy options, four selected criteria will measure the impact of US policy choices: nuclear weapons, neighbors, price, and precedent.

Impact on North Korean Nuclear Weapons. Because US policy seeks to achieve complete, verifiable, and irreversible North Korean nuclear disarmament, the first and foremost consideration is how policy impacts the status of current North Korean nuclear

weapons and the country's capability to develop future nuclear weapons. This includes not only North Korea's already acknowledged plutonium production, but also its currently disavowed highly enriched uranium path to nuclear weapons. The first step is full disclosure while freezing production, followed by verification, and then ultimately dismantling any current weapons.

Impact on North Korean Neighbors. Since US policy options will be constrained by the proximity to and strength of North Korea's neighbors, it is necessary to analyze the impact of each policy on its neighbors: China, Japan, and South Korea. Russia's relatively minimal role and limited ability to leverage North Korea's actions marginalizes its impact on the crisis.[17]

Policy Costs. As with any US policy, the President is ultimately responsible for explaining the cost of his choices to American taxpayers. Costs will not only be measured in treasure, but also in the potential loss of life. Lives will be lost most obviously in a second Korean War scenario; however, coercive diplomacy such as economic sanctions also can lead to civilian casualties. One coercive policy implementation problem in North Korea is the leadership's ability and willingness to insulate themselves from the effects of sanctions. Finally, risk analysis is a paramount consideration in policy selection. North Korea has repeatedly threatened a military response to either United Nations' Security Council resolutions or economic sanctions. Furthermore, the United States cannot sit idly while North Korea develops nuclear weapons due to the high risk of resulting nuclear proliferation in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

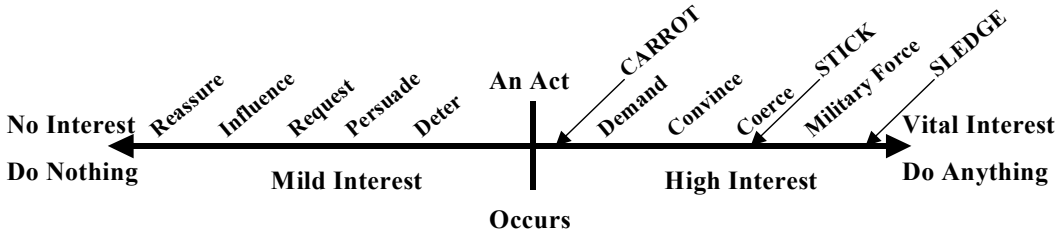
Precedent. How the world resolves the current North Korean nuclear crisis will affect future nuclear proliferation cases. Nuclear

nonproliferation has been an objective of the United States and the United Nations since the development of nuclear weapons. On 5 March 1970, the nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT) codified international support for halting the spread of nuclear weapons. The NPT regime has had numerous successes such as South Africa and Ukraine, but it has no answer for non-signatory countries that have developed nuclear weapons such as India, Pakistan, and Israel. North Korea is what former Secretary of Defense William Perry referred to as, "the poster-child of proliferation problems."[18] Forced to enter the NPT in December 1985 by the Soviet Union, North Korea threatened to withdraw in March 1993. North Korea's second threat to withdraw actually became effective on 10 April 2003, after it kicked out International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors, and was the first country to ever deny IAEA requests for special inspections.[19]

Spectrum of Interest and Policy

For most situations, there is a spectrum of a country's interest, influence, and policy tools to achieve its objectives. Consider the diagram at Figure 1. From this spectrum, coercive diplomacy is the most relevant in helping to explain the formulation of US policy options for North Korean nuclear weapons. North Korean nuclear weapons development is the act that has occurred and President Bush has stated America's interest in reversing this action. Although some may perceive that US diplomacy with respect to North Korea is inherently coercive due to the 37,000 US troops in South Korea, these forces are in place to help deter a North Korea attack and should deterrence fail, to defeat North Korean aggression. Beyond its deterrence mission, the United States may

Figure 1: Spectrum of Interests and Policy Tools



soon threaten or actually use military force as part of a coercive diplomatic policy to resolve the nuclear crisis.

Roadmap

This introduction explains why security in Northeast Asia is paramount to US interests, what assumptions were made, and why the author selected four specific criteria for evaluation. The core of this thesis is the analysis of three policy options when compared to four evaluation criteria and each policy's chance for success. The analysis of each policy option forms its own section, with each organized in the same fashion: an overview, analysis of the policy on each of the four criteria, and a summary.

The first section analyzes an incentive-based policy, referred to as "the carrot." It also reviews the 1994 nuclear crisis and the implications for future incentive-based policies. Due to the demise of the Agreed Framework, North Korea's previous difficulty in agreeing to inspection formats, and its negotiating tactic of maximum gain for minimum concessions, it is unlikely that incentives alone will buy North Korean nuclear disarmament.

The next section analyzes a coercive diplomatic solution known as "the stick." It also reviews US policy development during the 1994 nuclear crisis and the debate over Kim Jong-il's rationality. Although capable of analyzing the costs and benefits of various options, Kim Jong-il remains reluctant to permit transparency into North Korea and has the ability to isolate himself and his support base from economic strangulation. When combined with the low success rate and difficulty of conducting multilateral coercive diplomacy, the prospects for coercion are slim.

The third section reviews the advantages and disadvantages of using military force to rid North Korea of nuclear weapons and the

prospects for this policy option. Regardless of who wins the debate on how widespread damage to Korea's infrastructure or how high the loss of life will be, a second Korean war is not currently diplomatically or politically feasible. Ironically, although it has the greatest ability to disarm North Korean nuclear weapons, it has the least regional support.

The thesis concludes with a summary of findings and policy recommendations. For a variety of reasons, neither incentive-based nor coercive diplomacy will cause North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons program. Furthermore, military force is currently untenable. The best option is to convince North Korea that the Libyan model is better than the Iraqi model, in that it offers Pyongyang otherwise impossible security guarantees, regime survival, and improved economic and diplomatic conditions.

THE CARROT

This chapter evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of an incentive-based US policy for meeting the North Korean nuclear challenge and evaluates its chance for success. Although an incentive-based policy is both relatively inexpensive and favored by key regional partners, such as South Korea and China, it is unlikely to succeed. The United States government fundamentally mistrusts North Korea. Consider the high level of mistrust evident in Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly's remark:

> We tried the bilateral approach 10 years ago, by negotiating the Agreed Framework…and we found the North could not be trusted. This time, a new and more comprehensive approach is required.[20]

A potential US incentive-based policy could promise not to attack the DPRK in addition to providing energy and food aid in exchange for verifiable nuclear disarmament. However, the

resolution of the 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis resulted from this incentive-type approach, and Secretary Kelly's comment is an indicator of one of three reasons that this type of policy approach is likely to fail. First, the current US administration appears reluctant to give North Korea a second chance after feeling burned by the DPRK's secret pursuit of the highly enriched uranium path to nuclear weapons while under the 1994 Agreed Framework. Second, North Korea has repeatedly balked at various inspection regimes. The DPRK failed to agree to an inspection protocol under the Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC), refused to allow IAEA special inspections, and is opposed to increased levels of transparency. Finally, experts believe that without some real threat, North Korea will not voluntarily concede anything. Former Special Assistant to the President Daniel Poneman passed on given advice.

> One of the first things told me by somebody older and wiser than I about dealing with North Korea back in the early 1990s was that North Korea does not respond to pressure, but without pressure they do not respond.[21]

This manifests itself in North Korea's hard-line negotiating tactics, which consistently push for maximizing gains while minimizing concessions. This negotiating strategy is not unique to North Korea, but the DPRK's willingness to accept high levels of risk by using brinkmanship demonstrates a uniquely hard-line approach to international relations.

Background

The Agreed Framework. In June 1994, tensions escalated to what former Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter called the biggest nuclear crisis since the Cuban Missile Crisis. That same month, while President Clinton met with National Security Council principals to receive military strike briefings and while General

Luck was making emergency evacuation plans for 80,000 noncombatants from South Korea, former President Carter called the White House with a possible solution.[22] Flying to Pyongyang, he secured a peaceful resolution not as an official envoy of the United States, but as a concerned citizen. The Agreed Framework negotiations survived the July 1994 death of the Great Leader, Kim-il Sung, and the document was signed on 21 October 1994. Alexander George cited the Agreed Framework as an example of "conditional reciprocity" to achieve a lesser objective of policy modification versus regime behavioral modification.[23] In other words, the United States attempted to change DPRK nuclear policies by offering incentives that could meet the country's energy needs. Among several stipulations, North Korea agreed to comply with nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT) required safeguards and to allow IAEA inspectors to visit Yongbyon's nuclear facilities.

Those who argue against providing North Korea incentives to halt its nuclear ambitions claim that the 1994 Agreed Framework failed. North Korea promised to freeze its plutonium production at Yongbyon and Taechon in exchange for two light-water nuclear reactors and 500,000 tons of Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) per year until the first reactor was operational.[24] Not only did North Korea recently declare the Agreed Framework null and void, but also withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and expelled IAEA inspectors. However, there are two sides to every story. The execution phase of the Agreed Framework proved much more difficult than the drafting phase. Both the United States and North Korea created obstacles to the timely completion of key tasks. The United States overestimated potential contributions from member countries (Japan and South Korea) of the newly created consortium,

the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), and underestimated the costs of procurement.[25] The book by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle,* summarized US excuses for delays of HFO shipments as follows:

> The United States first overestimated the potential contributions to be received from member countries and then underestimated the costs of procurement and delivery, thereby underestimating the amount needed from Congress…. Thus, deliveries of HFO have often slipped to the point that the United States was technically in violation of the Agreed Framework.[26]

US State Department officials counter North Korea's accusations by explaining that during low-level detailed negotiations, North Korea repeatedly asked for more than what the Agreed Framework provided, and these numerous demands significantly delayed the delivery of goods. Examples ranged from intentionally delaying South Korean construction workers' visas to seeking comparable pay and housing standards for North Korean construction workers.[27] If the DPRK did not possess nuclear weapons in 1994 and it does now, did the diplomatic solution of nine years ago fail? Several experts claim that the Agreed Framework verifiably froze plutonium weapons production capability and thus bought the United States time. Experts argue that the United States accepted the risk of North Korea cheating under the Agreed Framework in exchange for slowing the pace of weapons development. It has also been argued that acceptance of this solution was influenced by the administration's prevailing belief that North Korea's communist dictatorship would suffer economic collapse. David Albright, President of ISIS, stated the following:

> The Agreed Framework does not solve the basic verification problem. When it was signed in 1994, the United States said that inspections would start in five years. Those five years have come and gone, and it may still be another four years before inspections start. For these reasons, we remain concerned about the lack of transparency of the North Korean nuclear program.[28]

The Agreed Framework was the best of only bad options available at the time. Moreover, although, it secured a tactical victory (freeze plutonium production) with legalistic compliance, it was a strategic failure since North Korea's pursuit of highly enriched uranium violated the "spirit and intent" of the agreement's premise: preventing a nuclear-armed North Korea by offering energy alternatives.

North Korean Negotiating Tactics. Dr. Yong-Sup Han's research of North Korean negotiating tactics yielded several findings.[29] First, North Korea employed different tactics with South Korea than it did with the United States. Second, North Korea used brinkmanship (creating a crisis) to bring the United States to the negotiating table. Third, once at the table, North Korea sought to expand the negotiation's scope to include other items such as normalizing relations with the United States. As Dr. Han noted, "North Korea again pursued a strategy of maximizing gains while minimizing concessions."[30] He explained that North Korea subdivided issues to exploit every possible piece of the negotiations to achieve maximum gains from the United States. Unique to negotiations with the United States, North Korea feigned an internal struggle between diplomats and hard-line military leaders to explain the reason for not pushing North Korean diplomats too hard for concessions as their removal from any negotiations was possible. Finally, his article concluded with policy implications that urged a

balanced "carrot and stick" approach to North Korea. He argued that in order to correct North Korea's misperception that brinkmanship will benefit its position, "the United States needs to design more effective and varied sticks."[31]

More of the Same? Contentious comparisons are often made between the 1994 crisis and the current crisis. Is the current crisis similar to the 1994 crisis? The answer is not simply yes or no, but rather a little yes mixed with mostly no. There are tremendous differences in leadership, economic situations, North Korean nuclear weapons status, and regional influences. The US global war on terrorism is an additional factor that separates the two situations.

The leaders of every country involved in the six-party talks were new to nuclear negotiations, and most were relatively new leaders of their respective countries. Negotiations over the Agreed Framework survived the July 1994 death of "the Great Leader," Kim il-Sung, and after a few years, his son, Kim Jong-il, consolidated his powerbase and became known as "the Dear Leader." Hu Jintao was elected president of China on 15 March 2003, only one month prior to Beijing hosting three-party talks and six months prior to hosting the six-party talks. There have been six Japanese Prime Ministers since the 1994 nuclear crisis. The current Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi enjoyed widespread support when he took office in 2001, but now faces criticism for a sluggish economy. US President George Bush took office in January of 2001 and soon faced the challenges created by the attacks on 11 September 2001. South Korean President Roh took office on 25 February 2003 with gifts from North Korea that included two anti-ship missile firings, an airspace violation, and the announcement that the DPRK had restarted its 5MW reactor![32] Furthermore, he

was recently distracted by a presidential impeachment process; a case that was ultimately dismissed by South Korean courts.

The economic situation in Asia is different following the economic crisis of 1997-98. North Korea's failing economy was predicted to collapse shortly after the floods of the 1990s and was reported to be a consideration for the choice of a diplomatic solution based upon the belief that the country would collapse internally prior to developing nuclear weapons. The impact of economic trade in the region can hardly be understated. North Korea has a desperate need for hard currency, food, and energy. Japan has publicly tied any future North Korean assistance to nuclear concessions and resolution of the abductees issue, while other countries such as China have continued to trade with North Korea due to potential economic gains and possibly to stave off the chaos of a North Korean collapse.

North Korea most likely did not possess nuclear weapons deliverable by missile in 1994. Recently, unclassified Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reports and Congressional testimony claim that North Korea most likely already possesses one or two nuclear weapons.[33] In addition, it is no longer possible to confirm the status of some of the 8,000 spent fuel rods previously under IAEA monitoring. Using these fuel rods, North Korea may be able to produce several more nuclear weapons quickly. Beyond the plutonium path, North Korea's pursuit of highly enriched uranium, and its now publicly revealed ties to Pakistan nuclear technology via A.Q. Khan's international nuclear black-market, increase the urgency of finding an acceptable solution.

The influence of regional powers also has changed. The collapse of the Soviet Union ended its ability to support North

Korea economically. Some argue that Russia is seeking to improve relations with North Korea due to economic gains from increased arms-sale markets. China has shown a greater interest in resolving the tension peacefully as demonstrated by its decision to host the six-party talks in Beijing. In the past, US requests for China's support and involvement in resolving the conflict were coolly received. Kim Jong-il's hushed visit to Beijing followed shortly after Vice President Cheney's April 2004 visit to China. Leaked only to South Korean journalists, there were reports that Beijing was relating to North Korea an increased sense of urgency to resolve the nuclear issue.[34] North Korea's 1998 missile test over Japan frightened the country into launching two reconnaissance satellites, and for the first time publicly, Diet members discussed increased security to include possible nuclear weapons. Two men defused the 1994 crisis: former US President Carter and Kim il-Sung. In contrast, the current multilateral diplomatic path significantly complicates negotiations.

Although controversial, US operations in Afghanistan and Iraq sent a clear message to Kim Jong-il. In fact, the message was so clear the dictator went into hiding for approximately 48 days around the start of US-led Operation Iraqi Freedom.[35] Experts have proposed that North Korea learned two important lessons from US policy toward Iraq. First, North Korea may have determined after the first Gulf War that allowing United Nations inspections simply permits the collection of evidence that will lead to further military intervention. Second, North Korea may believe that chemical weapons will not deter US military action; only nuclear weapons will effectively stop US military action in the Korean peninsula. There are several possible motivations for North Korea's pursuit of

nuclear weapons—prestige, blackmail, or military use—but a leading theory is to deter a US invasion. The irony lies in the fact that North Korean nuclear weapons development may be the tripwire that causes what North Korea hopes to avoid. Although there are numerous differences, issues such as mistrust, incompatible policy objectives, and fear of North Korean collapse remain in the current crisis.

Critics of the 1994 Agreed Framework point to North Korea's pursuit of highly enriched uranium based weapons. Supporters of the policy argue that it "bought the United States time" by delaying North Korean plutonium production capabilities. During an August 2003 lecture at the Naval Postgraduate School, former CIA Director James Woolsey clearly articulated his position by stating, "any agreement with North Korea is worse than worthless."[36] This attitude appears common enough among diplomats in Washington to create intense policy debate, but it remains in the shadows of US policy in Iraq.

US policy objectives for North Korean nuclear weapons include verifiable nuclear disarmament and cessation of all efforts to procure nuclear weapons. North Korea seeks security guarantees from the United States and has previously opposed comprehensive inspections for fear of revealing the status of not only their nuclear capabilities, but also their conventional and chemical weapons status. Even if North Korea is willing to trade away future nuclear weapons production capability, it will most likely demand additional incentives for weapons surrendered or worse to "grandfather" current weapons. Referring to these types of demands, President Bush commented, "What this country won't do is be blackmailed."[37]

China and South Korea fear a refugee problem and the negative economic effect associated with a North Korean collapse. Although economic studies differ on South Korea's cost for peaceful reunification with the North, estimates, measured in the hundreds of billions, show a high of $1.7 trillion.[38] In addition, China views its smaller communist neighbor as a nice security buffer to both US forces and South Korea's market economy.

Impact on North Korean Nuclear Weapons

For the United States to understand the impact any diplomatic policy will have on North Korean nuclear weapons, it must be able to verify compliance by means of an agreed inspection regime. The United States also would need to know the actual status of both North Korea's current nuclear weapons and both forms of fissile material production (i.e. plutonium and highly enriched uranium.) Establishing an agreed upon inspection regime to determine the baseline and ensure compliance has proven to be problematic in the past.

North Korea does not view the United Nations as a neutral party since it fought the Korean War against United Nations Command and remains obligated to its 1953 armistice. Next, considering two previously failed inspection attempts—one inter-Korean under the Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC), and one via a United Nations inspection vehicle, the IAEA—the prospect of successfully building an inspection mechanism appears bleak.

The IAEA: Objective Organization or US Coercion Tool?

Created in 1957 as the "Atoms for Peace" Agency, the IAEA is, "an independent intergovernmental, science and technology-based organization, in the United Nations, that serves as the global focal

point for nuclear cooperation."[39] The IAEA has 137 member states, an annual budget of approximately $268 million, and is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. The 35-member Board of Governors and the General Conference determine IAEA policies with reports submitted to both the UN Security Council and General Assembly.[40]

The IAEA interacted with North Korea prior to the DPRK's joining the NPT on 12 December 1985. On 20 July 1977, the IAEA and North Korea completed an agreement on safety measures for the IRT research reactor supplied to North Korea by the Soviet Union in the 1960s.[41] The IAEA underwent significant changes following lessons learned from Iraqi inspections and the increased sharing of classified information to focus agency inspections on suspect sites. The United States and other countries deemed it prudent to share classified information with the agency and the world to establish the necessary global interest, support, and credibility for nonproliferation initiatives. Although receiving classified information from various nations has resulted in improved inspections, it came at a cost to the IAEA's reputation of neutrality. By sharing information, the agency risks losing its reputation as an impartial inspector of international norms and may be perceived as an instrument of US foreign policy.

Previous Failed Inspection Attempts.

a. The Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC). On 31 December 1991, North and South Korea signed a Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Among its pledges was the promise to ban the possession and use of nuclear weapons, nuclear reprocessing, and uranium enrichment facilities to include any testing, manufacturing, production storage, or

deployment of these types of weapons. These pledges were to be verified by establishing the Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC), responsible for conducting inspections of, "particular subjects chosen by the other side and agreed upon between the two sides."[42] The JNCC was established in March of 1992, but after optimistic beginnings, it failed when both parties could not agree on inspection terms. The JNCC has not met since 1993. According to Holly Higgins, an ISIS analyst, the JNCC failed due to a lack of experience in bilateral inspection negotiations, a lack of trust, and the failure to agree on three elements of an effective inspection regime: equal number of inspections, no sanctuaries, and "challenge" inspections which could be given with a mere 24 hours notice.[43] Dr. Yong-Sup Han concurs that North Korea is reluctant to permit the level of transparency requested by South Korea and the United States. Referring to North Korea's position on challenge inspections, he wrote

> North Korea remained consistent on the issue of the inspection regime. North Korea strongly opposed the concept of intrusive inspection regime such as the challenge inspection requested by the South in the inter-Korean nuclear talks and the special inspections requested by the IAEA. North Korea especially disliked inspections of military bases, but it demanded inspections of US bases in the South, charging that the United States had stationed more than 1,000 nuclear weapons on South Korean soil.[44]

The JNCC's failure occurred nearly simultaneously with tension over the US-ROK exercise Team Spirit and the escalating nuclear crisis, which culminated in 1994. This was not a stellar start for building trust by means of an inspection regime.

b. IAEA's Role in the 1994 North Korean Nuclear Crisis. As a result of the North-South impasse, the DPRK announced its intended withdrawal from the NPT and sought direct negotiations

with the United States. The 1994 Crisis had at its core, two major events: North Korea's failure to resolve discrepancies found by IAEA inspections satisfactorily, and the US-ROK Combined military exercise Team Spirit. In April 1992, North Korea made its initial declaration of plutonium to the IAEA and agreed to host inspectors. Although North Korea joined the NPT on 12 December 1985, it failed to conclude the required safeguard agreements within the proscribed 180 days. The DPRK did not miss the deadline by weeks or months, but by nearly six years. It finally came into full compliance in May of 1992 when it permitted Hans Blix, then IAEA Director General, and his team to conduct inspections of the Yongbyon nuclear research complex.[45] When compared with North Korean initial disclosure statements, the results of these inspections did not match. The IAEA went through extensive internal debates on North Korea's required level of reporting accuracy and repeatedly requested clarification and updates from North Korea. It was during these back-and-forth communications that the leaders within the IAEA began to agree that things did not add up. Several interactions then occurred between the IAEA and North Korea:

- **11-16 May 1992**: IAEA inspection at Yongbyon goes well. DPRK releases press statement that essentially states IAEA inspectors are welcome anywhere, anytime;
- **Fall 1992**: IAEA discovers discrepancies between declared plutonium and inspection results;
- **February 1993**: IAEA and DPRK are at an impasse over discrepancies;
- **February 1993**: IAEA first ever request for "special inspections" in North Korea;
- **12 March 1993**: DPRK notifies both IAEA and UN Security Council of its intention to withdraw from the NPT;

- **11 May 1993**: UN Security Council adopts a resolution calling on North Korea to honor its nonproliferation obligations and to reconsider.[46]

North Korea remains the only country to have ever refused IAEA special inspections. Based upon these past experiences, both with fellow Koreans and an international organization, the chance for future North Korean voluntary cooperation with inspection regimes appears slim.

Future Inspection Regimes: How Much Transparency?

Verification is the crux of any diplomatic solution. How many and what type of inspections to demand is a tightrope balancing act: which regime will achieve enough transparency to ensure North Korean compliance without demanding so much that it gets nothing. David Albright, an expert from ISIS, offered the following insights and recommendations. First, the 1994 Agreed Framework did not solve the basic verification problem because it gave North Korea five years before inspections were to commence. Second, given the tense relationship between the IAEA and North Korea, a parallel bilateral US-DPRK inspection mechanism should be established immediately to provide feedback on compliance and permit faster implementation of the Agreed Framework. In addition, in the event of another IAEA-DPRK dispute, transparency could continue via this bilateral arrangement.[47] Third, Albright provided a detailed description and recommendation for what standard of accuracy North Korea should be held to as compared to other IAEA inspections such as South Africa. In short, he argued that North Korea should be held to a plutonium reporting accuracy that is within 10-20 percent of inspector's estimates.[48] Seongwhun Cheon also addressed the inspection issue, detailing the pros and cons of five different inspection regimes. Regardless of the inspection

regime's format, to achieve greater openness she recommended inspectors recognize and promote North Korea's scientific advances due to North Korean cultural emphasis on pride and self-respect.[49]

Even accepting a wider range of accurate reporting, North Korea will be reluctant to open its doors to inspectors. A 1984 tape-recorded conversation with Kim Jong-il smuggled out by a kidnapped South Korean actress, reveals his reluctance to open up his country to any foreign influence:

> After having experienced about thirty years of socialism, I feel we need to expand to the Western world to feed the people. The reality is that we are behind the West. However, we cannot afford to open up even as the Chinese are urging because we have been stuck strategically. Opening up the country even for tourism would be naturally tantamount to disarmament and could only be done after unification.[50]

Overall Prospects for Increasing Transparency. Absent a threat for non-compliance, other than losing whatever incentive the United States offers, this policy approach will result in limited transparency. Proponents of this policy point out that some visibility is better than none—none being the level provided by coercion or military force until the policy achieves North Korean capitulation. In addition, North Korea has a history of rejecting higher levels of inspections that both the United States and the IAEA demand to ensure compliance. Since North Korea can choose to accept or reject whatever inducements the United States offers in return for surrendering its nuclear weapons, it has greater leverage to limit inspections.

Assuming North Korea agrees to special inspections, an incentive-based policy runs a relatively high risk of North Korean cheating. Even utilizing a quid-pro-quo approach, the chances for North Korea to cheat by hiding nuclear weapons or future

production capability is relatively high as compared to a coercive approach or military force. Incremental verification mechanisms may prevent another financially costly mistake if North Korea violates protocol. It cannot force a high enough level of transparency, however, to achieve acceptably low risk. In short, the risk of North Korea retaining or selling nuclear weapons or technology is higher than the chance for successful compliance. Similarly, it is not in anyone's best interests to dismiss past North Korean violations of signed agreements. Although it can be argued that North Korea technically adhered to the specifics of the Agreed Framework, it clearly violated the spirit and intent of the 1994 Agreement and the specifics of the 1991 joint North-South declaration of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Impact on Neighbors

China. China would like nothing more than for the United States to resolve the current crisis quietly by providing North Korea the carrot it so desperately seeks, security guarantees. China's threat perception of North Korean nuclear weapons is low; however, it fears nuclear proliferation in the region, especially the implications of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan going nuclear. In addition, China fears that North Korea may provoke a preemptive US attack that would trigger massive refugee flows into China and result in a unified Korea under ROK control with the US alliance intact. This policy approach would be the easiest to sell to North Korea and permits China to tout itself as the great mediator that peacefully resolved the most pressing security issue in Northeast Asia without sacrificing anything significant. The carrot approach achieves all three of China's objectives: no nuclear weapons, no war, and no North Korean collapse. It also would have no negative

impact upon key economic considerations such as trade with South Korea and China's continued supply of coal and oil to meet North Korea's energy needs.

Japan. In contrast to China, Japan perceives North Korean nuclear weapons and its ballistic missiles as a direct, credible threat. Even though incentive based policies would also benefit Japan, it is not likely to trust North Korean compliance. Extensive drug trafficking, admitted kidnappings, threats to turn Tokyo into a sea of fire, and lobbing a 3-stage missile over mainland Japan have left a lasting negative impression of North Korea on the Japanese psyche. Although in the past, there has been little public support to change Japan's "peace constitution," in April 2003, the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) revised its policy of, "possessing the minimum defense capability necessary for an independent country" to, "coping with new threats."[51] In response to the 1998 Taepo Dong launch, Japan launched two spy satellites in March 2003, in a calculated move to be less reliant upon American intelligence sources. Other military defense measures include more active support of US missile defense, consideration of procuring new PAC-3 missile systems to place around critical infrastructure, and mounting ship-based missile defense systems on Aegis-class destroyers.[52]

In addition to considering military posture changes, Japan has withheld humanitarian assistance to North Korea during the current crisis. They have also begun to consider policy options in the event incentive based diplomacy fails. For example, during the 1994 crisis, Japan estimated that it might be able to reduce some of the approximately $600 million per year that flows into North Korea from Korean sympathizers living in Japan.[53]

South Korea. The popular expression, "The road from Washington to Pyongyang must pass through Seoul," indicates the precarious position of the US-ROK alliance.[54] Even though North Korea's record of aggression against the South is replete with outrageous examples of unconstrained aggression, some current ROK leaders do not appear to believe that North Korea will employ nuclear weapons against the South. Similar to the Chinese reaction, an incentive-based approach conforms nicely with South Korea's Sunshine Policy of engagement through dialogue and exchanges. Although difficult for US diplomats to comprehend in light of past violence, many South Koreans feel a kinship with North Korea and actually view the United States as the key obstacle to peaceful reunification of the peninsula and the true target of North Korean nuclear weapons.[55]

President Roh's inexperience in national politics and international crisis was evident at the outset of his administration. Any of Roh's comments viewed as too supportive of a US hard-line approach toward North Korea met angry domestic resistance. Eventually, Roh's administration settled on a policy of not tolerating North Korean nuclear weapons, but resolving the situation peacefully. He appears unwilling to even consider what steps should be taken if diplomacy fails, referring to the situation as an issue, not a crisis. This unwillingness to even consider military strikes against North Korea negatively impacts the perception of the US-ROK alliance, limits the chance for coercive diplomacy success, and could cripple potential military operations by denying US forces the ability to operate from South Korea.

China and South Korea favor an incentive-based policy approach, are not supportive of coercive options, and explicitly

object to any discussion of the use of military force.[56] Japan, would also prefer an incentive-based policy approach, but has similar views to most US diplomats that the prospects for success are not good.

Costs

It is possible, however, to buy North Korean concessions—sometimes. If the allegations are confirmed in court, the historic North-South summit of 2000 may have been financed under the table. To summarize an article from the *Korea Herald*, a South Korean probe alleges that Kim Dae Jung's former culture minister Park transferred hundreds of millions of dollars from Hyundai's Asian chairman Chung Mong-hun to North Korea in order to entice them to agree to the summit.[57] Park was alleged to have secret contacts within the North Korean government. Domestically, former South Korean Presidents Roh and Kim Dae Jung publicly admitted taking illegal payoffs and stated that operating political slush funds had been the norm for decades.[58]

North Korea has a track record of seeking financial or humanitarian aid for any concessions. In August 1998, US intelligence uncovered a suspected secret North Korean underground facility that it wanted to inspect. According to Don Oberdorfer's sources, North Korea initially requested $300 million to permit US inspectors access to the site.[59] *New York Times* correspondent David Sanger published an article on 17 August 1998 that put the issue on the front page. According to Oberdorfer, after six months of negotiations that established a price of 600,000 tons of food and a new potato-production program, a 14-member US team inspected Kumchang-ni for three days in May 1999. Their findings released 25 June 1998, revealed a grid pattern of

underground tunnels totaling six miles in length, but the facility did not contain a nuclear reactor or reprocessing plant.

In addition to money and food, it is possible to trade North Korean concessions for issues they view as critical. For example, the cancellation of the joint ROK-US exercise Team Spirit achieved major gains in previous negotiations with North Korea. An incentive-based policy approach is less costly to all countries than a second Korean War both in terms of treasure and of lives. Paying for incentives such as energy and food would cost South Korea more than they would lose in trade with the North. China should not be expected to offer any public incentives for North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons and thus incurs no costs beyond participating in the six party talks. US Congressional approval for incentive policy costs will be difficult to obtain, but would most likely cost less than enforcing rigid economic sanctions via a blockade or more flexible sanctions such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) announced by President Bush in December 2002.

KEDO. The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established as a financial consortium to facilitate financing agreed to under the 1994 Agreed Framework. The European Union joined the three original countries, the United States, South Korea, and Japan, in 1997. The organization's charter requires consensus and provides each country veto power. KEDO began operating in July 1995 and ran aground almost immediately. Facing both internal and external challenges, its former executive director called managing the organization as difficult as "herding cats."[60] One internal source of frustration was the disparity in financial support for the Light Water Reactor Construction Project

in North Korea. A Republican controlled House of Representatives accused the Clinton administration of being soft on North Korea and refused to pay for any construction costs. Congress begrudgingly appropriated approximately $35 million annually to pay for HFO shipments.[61] In stark contrast, South Korea shouldered most of the economic burden, paying approximately $4 billion and Japan funding $1 billion.[62] Tension developed when South Korea and Japan pointed out that the United States demanded to lead an organization in which it provided less than one percent of the funding.

Risks. Successful implementation of an incentive based policy approach has virtually no risk of escalating into military conflict and thus no predictable potential loss of life. It does however run a high risk of failure. The result of incentive based policy failure is a shift in policy that most likely leads to coercion or military force.

Precedent

An incentive-only policy approach establishes a horrendous precedent for future proliferation cases. The purported view is that North Korea is successfully blackmailing the United States into paying to stop its behavior, which violated the NPT among other protocols. The potential lesson learned for other countries such as Syria and Iran could be that rapid development of nuclear weapons not only brings the United States to the negotiating table, but also opens its treasury. Consider the recent opposite precedent established by Libya's unveiling of its nuclear program in order to secure the benefits of cooperating with the United States and avoid the costs of getting caught.

President Bush publicly praised Colonel Ghadafi for abandoning Libya's pursuit of illegal weapons and promised

improved relations pending completion of promises made. In his speech to announce increased nonproliferation policies in February 2004, President Bush called on other regimes to follow Libya's example.[63] Analysis of Libya's nuclear capitulation may reveal the true reasons it quit pursuing nuclear weapons, but one could argue that the benefits gained by compliance with international norms outweighed the costs of non-compliance. What remains to be seen in Libya's case is what key Libyan leaders believed to be their cost-benefit analysis.

Summary

Even though an incentive-based policy approach is an easy sell to North Korea's neighbors and is relatively inexpensive, its chances for success are slim. In light of joint bitterness following the demise of the Agreed Framework, previous failures to agree upon an acceptable inspection regime, and North Korea's tendency not to act unless threatened, there is little chance for an incentive-only based policy to succeed. The United States most likely will not offer something valuable enough to entice North Korea to surrender the nuclear weapons that it sacrificed so much to produce. Even assuming the deal was sweet enough for North Korea to accept, it will presumably not accept the high level of transparency that US negotiators will demand.

THE STICK

This section compares and contrasts the advantages and disadvantages of potential coercive diplomatic solutions and their chances for success based on information on US plans for coercive diplomacy during the 1994 nuclear crisis. Coercive diplomacy without incentives that meet North Korea's dire energy and food needs and provide a face-saving exit ramp will fail to achieve the

US objective of complete, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament. Transparency problems that emerge during an incentive-based policy also exist with a coercive policy. Quite simply, North Korea opposes opening its country to external review. In addition, the required multilateral approach significantly reduces the chances for successful execution of coercive diplomacy. In short, the United States will not be able to "herd the cats" toward coercing North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons. Finally, coercive diplomacy would likely only increase the misery suffered by North Korean citizens because Kim Jong-il can insulate his regime from the effects of economic disaster.

Coercive Theory Review

Coercive Diplomacy. George limited his study of coercion to what he termed defensive strategies and differentiated them from other non-military strategies. He described defensive coercion as, "efforts to persuade an opponent to stop or reverse an action."[64] Defensive coercion differs from offensive uses of coercion, which he referred to as blackmail strategies and defined as, "efforts to persuade a victim to give up something of value without putting up resistance."[65] Since North Korea's development of nuclear weapons violated the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the 1991 Joint North South declaration for a nuclear free Korean Peninsula, and the 1994 Agreed Framework, it is possible to view coercive diplomacy as defensive since the policy goal would be to stop the action of nuclear weapons development. A counter argument would be that coercive diplomacy at this time would be offensive in nature because it seeks to force North Korea to surrender something of extreme value, their nuclear weapons. Regardless of the nuances, coercive policy application strives to first halt, then reverse North

Korea's nuclear weapon's development, an action that it values dearly and that the United States wants it to surrender.

George also differentiated defensive coercion from four other non-military strategies: drawing a line, buying time to explore a negotiated settlement, retaliation and reprisals, and engaging in a test of capabilities. In drawing a line, one party simply warns their opponent that any further action will provoke a strong response. The buying time strategy is self-explanatory and can be used if a defender is operating from a position of disadvantage or believes that their opponent's dissatisfaction has some merit. George described reprisals as carefully measured responses that match, but do not exceed, the adversary's actions.[66] Finally, he used the US airlift response to the ground-based Russian blockade of Berlin following the Second World War as an example of testing capabilities as a response to an adversary's action.

George preferred not to use Thomas Schelling's term, compellance, because it was often used as an over-arching term to describe diplomatic strategies that included offensive and defensive coercion and occasionally deterrence.[67] Deterrence is strategy to prevent an adversary from taking an action and thus different from coercion that seeks to stop or reverse an opponent's action. With respect to how lofty an objective coercive diplomacy can hope to achieve, George used three levels: stop an action, reverse past accomplishments, and cease hostile behavior by forcing governmental or regime change. Current Bush administration policy seeks a second-level objective, the surrender of nuclear weapons, but stops short of the third level, North Korean regime change. Obviously, the higher the policy goal, the higher the required level of effort. In addition, how dearly an adversary values

what they have accomplished will increase the level of coercive effort and ultimately decrease the probability of success.

Turning Theory into Policy. George listed two requirements for coercive diplomacy to succeed. First, coercion requires a credible and potent enough threat to convince an adversary that it should acquiesce to their opponent's demands. Second, coercive diplomacy assumes a "rational" opponent. George explained three limitations of his abstract model of coercion. First, the model only identifies the general logic of coercion and does not include what is necessary to convert it into policy. Second, an operationalized model is required to give it a predictive capability. Last, it is not a stand-alone strategy, and it is essential to incorporate it into a broader strategy. George recommended four tasks to design a coercive policy recommendation:

- Fill in the four key variables: a demand, level of urgency, a threat, and potential incentives;
- Identify a preferred variant (level) of coercion: Classic Ultimatum, Tacit Ultimatum, Turn the Screw, or Try & See;
- Replace the purely rational actor theory with an empirically derived behavioral model;
- Take into account the contextual variables of the given situation.

The first task consists of four critical decision points. First, leaders must decide what to demand of an adversary. Second, policy makers must decide if they wish to create a sense of urgency for compliance and if so, how. Third, strategists must develop a credible and potent threat of punishment commensurate with operational capabilities as well as how much they are demanding of an adversary. Finally, diplomats must decide whether to offer any incentives (carrots) for compliance or the speed of reply. This

section discusses turning theory into specific policy for North Korea Also, both the Perry Report and Richard Armitage's suggestions on dealing with North Korea contain specific policy recommendations.

Richard Armitage Recommendations and the Perry Report. Richard Armitage chaired a working group on US policy toward North Korea in the late 1990s, and the group's findings, initially published in March 1999, were reprinted in the 2000 Institute for Science and International Study book, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle*.[68] The group outlined the debate surrounding the failure of the 1994 Agreed Framework and its three underlying assumptions: the Framework ended North Korea's nuclear weapons development, North Korea was a failed state on the verge of a "hard landing," and that the Agreement would induce North Korea to open up to the outside world.[69] The well-written policy recommendations included a reality check as of 1999, supported the conduct of the Perry Report, and called for such things as security assurances, food and economic assistance, the possibility of sanctions for compliance failure, as well as the six-party talks format currently being used. Furthermore, Armitage asked two fundamental questions, the first of which has been answered by the Bush administration. "What precisely does the United States want from North Korea?"[70] US policy objectives are the complete, verifiable, and irreversible disarmament of North Korean nuclear weapons. Second, "what price is the United States prepared to pay for it?"[71] He also outlined the two dismal options available should diplomacy fail: live with and deter a nuclear North Korea or preemption.[72]

In November 1998, President Clinton tasked Dr. William J. Perry to lead a team of experts to conduct a comprehensive US

policy review toward North Korea. His team worked for eight months with an interagency group headed by the Counselor of the Department of State, Wendy R. Sherman, and consulted with senior officials from several agencies and nations, including the DPRK. An unclassified report, released on 12 October 1999, detailed numerous findings, policy options, and a policy recommendation. At the heart of the report's "new comprehensive, and integrated approach" toward negotiations with North Korea were "complete and verifiable assurances that the DPRK does not have a nuclear weapons program."[73] The Perry Report did not make more detailed recommendations on inspection team composition or locations to visit.

Background to Current Situation

The second round of six-party talks met in Beijing in late February 2004 with little or no tangible success. How long the United States and North Korea will continue to dance with their Northeast Asian partners remains to be seen, but at some point, it can be assumed that the US administration will want to change the music by shifting to a more coercive policy approach. During the 1994 crisis, former Secretary of Defense Perry stated that the policy shift from "preventive diplomacy" to "coercive diplomacy," including sanctions, occurred in early June 1994 when the IAEA reported that North Korea was defueling its nuclear reactor earlier and faster than announced.[74]

Then. During the 1994 shift in policy, the United States adopted a coercive policy of gradual sanctions that followed Alexander George's steps for turning theory into policy. The United States had a plan for filling in the blanks for its demands, level of urgency, threat, and potential incentives. The

administration demanded that North Korea comply with NPT safeguards, specifically to allow IAEA inspectors to monitor its nuclear facilities. With respect to the level of urgency, the administration intended to give North Korea thirty days to comply before enforcing the first level of what George would call a "turn the screw" type policy. The first-level punishment would ban arms sales and nuclear technology transfers. If needed, the second level would cut off remittances and vital oil supplies from abroad. The third level would blockade shipping to and from North Korean ports.[75] China, South Korea, and Japan expressed very little interest in pursuing even the first level of sanctions.

Now. The Bush administration is resisting the temptation to advance to the next level of diplomatic pressure. The administration has avoided open discussion on the prospects of coercion such as sanctions for fear of alienating China with its Security Council Veto authority. Vice President Cheney's April 2004 visit to Beijing reportedly included discussion of the North Korean issue, but no published insight into the details of the discussion appear. North Korean rhetoric is not as restrained. An official North Korean press release countered every aspect of US policy objectives for disarmament.

> Complete nuclear dismantling is a plot to overthrow the North's socialist system after stripping it of its nuclear deterrent. Verifiable nuclear dismantling reflects a US intention to spy on our military capabilities before starting a war. Irreversible nuclear dismantling is nothing other than a noose to stifle us after eradicating our peaceful nuclear-energy industry.[76]

Domestically, the policy debate surrounding coercive diplomacy begins with the issue of rationality, which Alexander George originally viewed as a potential non-starter. He later

relaxed this assumption by stressing the importance of behavioral model theory development as a solution to rationality's limitations.[77] Determining Kim Jong-il's rationality and creating an accurate behavioral model appears more problematic than funding a manned mission to Mars. However, how much fidelity into Kim's thinking does the United States require? Does Kim's apparent irrationality increase his diplomatic strength?

Kim Jong-il: Rational Actor or Midget Madman? Kim's rationality is relevant because coercive diplomacy assumes that an adversary has a process in place to conduct cost benefit analysis based on correct, relevant information. Kim Jong-il is a rational actor—as far as he is concerned. A short man, standing 5' 3", he is reported to have said, "I know I'm an object of criticism in the world, but if I am being talked about, I must be doing the right things."[78] Some experts refer to him as a malignant narcissist whose father built over 34,000 monuments to himself.[79] For US politicians, it is easier to refer to him as a cognac-guzzling, womanizer whose paranoia sent him in pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. Most likely, his foreign policy decisions fall somewhere in between the two extremes of rational actor and madman. As a review, "to describe behavior as 'rational' is to say little more than that the actor attempts to choose a course of action that he hopes or expects to further his values."[80] The combination of ideas from the scholars on rationality produces five key points.

- Gather all available information;
- Understand pertinent cause and effect relationships;
- Have a process for developing courses of action;
- Have a method to evaluate chance of success and impact to values;

- Select course of action that provides the greatest utility.

A rational process, however, does not require leaders to have similar values, desired outcomes, or willingness to accept risk. Why would a rational leader continue to conduct state-sponsored terrorism and other illegal activities that limit foreign investment and international relief while millions of his people starve?[81] Due to North Korea's extreme isolation, the world will probably never know the truth, but one theory that provides insight in analyzing Kim's behavior is cognitive consistency theory.

Consistency theory suggests that leaders deviate from rationality because of their inability to accept three concepts: uncertainty in international affairs is common, preconceptions may be wrong, and their preferred options are not always the best.[82] These three misperceptions lead the decision maker to avoid inconsistencies, ignore potentially valuable information, and attempt to remove doubt from possible outcomes. The result is a faulty decision-making process that only evaluates alternatives aligned with preconceived notions.

There are four potential core beliefs that drive DPRK policies. First, Kim Jong-il probably believes that the United States intends to topple his regime by military force. Second, Kim probably believes that possessing nuclear weapons will deter US military action. Third, Kim could believe that any external influence or information allowed into North Korea is inherently bad. Last, he may believe that the best policy for dealing with the United States is to threaten or use force to achieve limited objectives, or a fait accompli. There is irony in these core beliefs. The preconception that possessing nuclear weapons will deter US military action may, in fact, motivate the United States into action, also providing the

regional support it requires. Next, when viewed through Kim's paradigm, he may be correct that external influence or information (the "truth" about such things as ROK quality of living) would result in public unrest.

> The present situation on the Korean peninsula remains dangerous owing to the reckless moves of the US war hawks and their followers to unleash a war of aggression against the DPRK so that nuclear war may break there anytime.[83]

As crazy as press releases such as the above appear, Alexander George cautions people to avoid using the term "irrational." He points out that errors in a decision-making process such as oversimplification or arriving at different conclusions based upon different values do not make a process or a leader "irrational." He defined irrationality as a person who, "has abandoned reality-testing, is totally lacking in sense, behaves impulsively or mindlessly, etc."[84] Former US Secretary of State Madeline Albright met with Kim Jong-il in January 2000 and stated that she had expected to meet a womanizing madman, but found him to be charming and able to speak knowledgably on a wide range of subjects without notes.[85] In addition, North Korea's history of challenging the United States with "bad behavior" to achieve economic benefits indicates a higher tolerance for risk taking than the United States, but is not a stand-alone indicator of irrationality.

It would be a mistake for US officials to assume that DPRK leaders are irrational or "totally lacking in sense" just because their policies are unethical, risky, or based upon values with which the United States disagrees. Consistency theory provides a starting point from which US diplomats may form a better behavioral model of Kim Jong-il. In addition, applying consistency theory to North Korea leads us to expect little change in Kim Jong-il's foreign

policy. He may misinterpret or choose to ignore shifts in US policy based upon his core beliefs. However, limited transparency of DPRK decision-making will continue to frustrate our ability to formulate an accurate behavioral model of Kim Jong-il.

Theory to Policy: Filling in the Blanks

Assuming an incentive-only strategy fails and the Bush administration believes Kim is rational enough to comprehend the ramifications of a US coercive policy, the United States will need to fill in the four key variables of George's first task, the first being what to demand of North Korea. The current US administration's demand has manifested itself in the press as the acronym CVI; complete, verifiable, and irreversible North Korean nuclear disarmament. The administration is delicately handling the second variable, level of urgency. No time limit has been given for North Korean compliance with US demands while six-party talks continue. However, actions such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) indicate a sense of urgency to North Korea and send a message to other countries that seek to develop nuclear weapons. Third, the United States will have to communicate a credible and potent enough threat clearly that matches US operational capabilities against the level of change it seeks in North Korea's nuclear program. This presents the most precarious position for the US-ROK alliance and all Northeast Asian partners. This step is the reason George noted that coercive diplomacy executed by multiple countries has a lower chance of success due to the difficulty in reaching consensus on implementation measures. The fourth and final variable facing US policymakers is determining if after making demands and threatening force, they intend to offer any incentives to provide North Korea a way out. As George and other political

experts indicated, the timing of incentives is critical. They should only occur after the adversary clearly understands the demands and threats.

To complete the second task, policymakers will need to choose between a gradual approach and demanding their ultimate objective. A graduated approach could incrementally demand that the DPRK acknowledge and halt all forms of nuclear weapons production, surrender current weapons, and dismantle the means of production.

Task three, deriving an empirical behavioral model, is the more difficult portion of coercive diplomacy policy recommendations and usually the weakest aspect of US strategy. It may be the underlying cause of what George's case studies identified as a low US success rate: two successes, three failures, and two ambiguous results.[86] Regardless of past success rates, tasks three and four are very complicated when dealing with the world's last heavily armed totalitarian communist country.

North Korea is a behavioral model conundrum. Led for the past 55 years by the world's only father-son communist dictatorship, North Korea is renowned for hostile negotiating tactics and fiery public statements. As George highlighted, to build an actor-specific behavioral model accurately, it is necessary to understand the adversary's motives, needs, and goals.[87] Moreover, this understanding is completely reliant on the adversary's perception, not what western diplomats believe to be North Korea's motives, needs, and goals. This allows for a level of fine-tuning that George argued differentiates conditional reciprocity from the blunter tit-for-tat cold war strategy to elicit cooperative behavior between actors in a prisoner's dilemma.[88] Therein lays the problem. US intelligence knows very little about the intimate decision-

making process within North Korea other than the fact that Kim Jong-il retains a secure power base with complete control despite catastrophic domestic conditions. In addition, North Korea's senior leaders can insulate themselves from potential coercive policy effects such as food shortages, demonstrated by their hording of humanitarian relief supplies during disastrous floods in the 1990's. The population tolerates governmentally rationed rice based on their complete indoctrination into *juche,* a self-reliant ideology cemented by terror. An ever-increasing number of defectors also report the existence of harsh political-criminal camps.[89]

It is essential the policy, once it takes shape, be evaluated within the context of a broader strategy toward North Korea. Regarding the Bush administration's 2001 strategy, Selig Harrison commented

> The problem is the Bush administration attitude. What they have in mind is the use of multilateral action to pressure North Korea with no incentives—just all sticks, no carrots.[90]

Coercion that offers no incentives is not likely to disarm a nuclear North Korea based upon its staggering energy and food aid requirements, past negotiating tactics, and significant investment in nuclear weapons development.

Impact on North Korean Nuclear Weapons

Coercion alone is the least likely policy approach to ensure compliance for three reasons. First, North Korea will resist an inspection regime to increase transparency. Second, North Korean leaders are "hyper-insulated" from the hardships suffered by the general population. One of Kim Jong-il's reported methods of control is to reward loyalty with gifts while terrorizing unsupportive behavior. According to a US State Department human rights report,

the DPRK has detained without trial between 150,000 to 200,000 political prisoners in "re-education camps."[91] Simultaneous with such internal human rights violations, Kim uses extravagant gifts to ensure military and party loyalty. Reportedly, the ultimate gift is a Mercedes-Benz with a license plate beginning with "2-16", in honor of Kim's 16 February 1942 birthday.[92] Third, coercion runs a relatively high risk of cheating. Consider the following analogy. If you press your boot into the neck of an adversary prostrate on the ground, are they more likely to acquiesce to your demands or to search for sand or a stick to throw in your eye? Thus goes the debate surrounding the question whether or not a Security Council resolution or economic sanctions increases the probability of North Korea surrendering its nuclear weapons or allowing more intrusive inspections. It is highly doubtful that absent any incentives, the threat of military force will coerce North Korea to surrender what it views to be its best deterrent to US aggression, especially having invested decades of work and an enormous percentage of very limited government funds.

Impact on Neighbors

Coercive diplomacy policy application is complicated in a multilateral environment, especially in Northeast Asia where Japan, South Korea, and China rely on regional stability that permits economic trade and growth. Even if all countries agree that North Korean nuclear weapons will destabilize the region, none agrees on the best approach to resolve the situation. All three countries also stand to lose varying amounts of trade with North Korea. According to economic data from 2000, over half of all North Korean imports come from China (26.7 percent), South Korea (16.2 percent), and Japan (12.3 percent).[93] More recently, even though

one-half of North Korea's total trade volume is with China, it is only $1.05 billion.[94]

China. Agreeing on the policy objective of no North Korea nuclear weapons, China currently opposes coercive diplomatic methods such as economic sanctions to achieve the goal. Internally, China continues to focus its efforts on controlling its economic growth (2002 GDP growth of 8 percent[95]) and preserving domestic single-party political stability in order to achieve great power status. Externally, its Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence articulate China's policy:

- Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty;
- Mutual non-aggression;
- Non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
- Equality and mutual benefit;
- And peaceful coexistence.[96]

Regional experts are both excited by and leery of China's increased willingness to assert itself with respect to North Korean nuclear weapons as evidenced by hosting the six-party talks. China is quietly balancing both sides of the issue by restraining the United States and pressuring North Korea. China has repeatedly asked the United States to reduce its level of urgency to resolve the issue and its insistence that North Korea admit to its highly enriched uranium nuclear weapons program. To pressure North Korea to stop provoking the United States, China closed its oil pipeline to North Korea for three days in late February 2003.[97] As the sole provider of 80 percent of North Korea's energy needs along with the majority of its foreign aid, China is the key to leveraging North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons. As the recipient of the preponderance of North Korean refugees, referred to as economic

migrants, China opposes coercion such as economic sanctions that would increase the flow of an already malnourished North Korean population. A 2002 Human Rights Watch report estimated the number of North Korean refugees living in hiding in China to be anywhere from 10,000 to 300,000.[98]

Japan. Japanese outrage at the 1998 North Korean missile launch and North Korea's admitted kidnapping of Japanese citizens is tempered only slightly by its security agreement with the United States, its constitutionally based belief on non-aggression as manifested by the maritime Self-Defense Force (SDF), and the country's preoccupation with economic issues. Enabled by the 1997 renegotiated bilateral defense guidelines with the United States, Japan's reactions to the 1998 North Korean missile test have been subtle, yet significant. Japan has been very supportive of the US global war on terrorism, to include the first overseas deployment of Japanese destroyers and support ships.[99] Initiatives to increase the SDF's ability to respond included legal authorizations to pursue and fire upon vessels in the 200-mile exclusive economic zone and an air-refueling capability to enable the right to attack missile sites in self-defense.[100]

In conjunction with these initiatives, an apparent shift in attitudes of some Japanese leaders has led to internal debates on policy. Stephen Kim outlined the divide between Japan's Deputy Vice Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka who favors dialogue and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe who commented "there is no one in the world who believes you can solve gangster troubles through dialogue."[101]

According to T. J. Pempel, an American academic expert on Japan, North Korea's kidnapping of Japanese citizens is as high a

priority to Japanese leaders as the nuclear issue.[102] In addition, a significant group of DPRK sympathizers exists and resides in Japan, believed to contribute between 60 to 120 billion yen per year to North Korea.[103] The North Korean kidnappings, trafficking of methamphetamines, and the 1998 missile test frustrated previous Japanese attempts to normalize relations with North Korea and to establish economic ties. As a result, although Japan accounts for approximately one-half of Northeast Asia economic output, it currently only consists of 17-18 percent of North Korea's trade.[104] Furthermore, North Korea's trade with Japan is declining, falling nearly 30 percent from 2002 to 2003, due to Japan's crackdown on North Korean illicit activities such as drug trafficking and other illegal exports.[105]

Finally, Japan has already tied future North Korean humanitarian aid directly to its behavior. Due to a long-standing history of conflict between the two countries, its limited economic interests in North Korea, and its desire for regional stability, Japan would most likely support a US led push for coercive diplomacy.

South Korea. Determined to be the "Hub of Northeast Asia," South Korea remains focused on democratic and economic reforms to continue its rise in stature in the region. The split on how South Koreans view North Korea is largely divided along the generation gap. Historically, students are the voice of change and constitute the vast majority of protestors. This younger generation, referred to as the 386'rs (in their 30s, educated in the 1980s, and born in the 1960s), view a unified Korea as a goal whereas veterans of the Korean War, still familiar with its devastation, view it as a threat. Accordingly, it is possible to generalize the population's view of a nuclear-armed North Korea as divided with conservatives fearful

and the opposition party arguing that North Korean nuclear weapons are not a significant issue for two key reasons. First, they believe North Korea would not use the weapons on fellow countrymen. Second, that following reunification, North Korean nuclear weapons would simply become Korean nuclear weapons. Further, South Korea has made significant economic investments in its outreach to North Korea. Therefore, it would shoulder the economic brunt of reunification costs and humanitarian relief involved with North Korean collapse. For these reasons, South Korea would most likely not support coercive diplomacy, but rather incentive based diplomacy or accepting a nuclear armed North Korea.

Costs

Pursuing coercive diplomacy in Northeast Asia requires the United States to spend international diplomatic capital, domestic political capital, and treasure; none of which it can currently afford. Prior to the November 2004 US Presidential election and the resolution of the South Korean Presidential impeachment process, no significant policy shifts will occur. In light of domestic and international blowback from the failure to find Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, the perceived unilateral action, and the current civil unrest in Iraq, major policy moves in Northeast Asia are currently politically impossible. However, North Korea has a track record of brinkmanship at vulnerable times such as these. If it elects to test a nuclear weapon or conduct another long-range missile test, that which was politically impossible could become imperative. It is possible to categorize the costs of coercive diplomacy into financial, human life, and the risk of the threat of the execution of military force.

Financial. Economic sanctions will not adversely affect the US economy directly due to long-standing sanctions in place since the Korean War. Although the 1994 Agreed Framework slightly eased sanctions, suffice it to say North Korea is not a key US trading partner. However, if the United States executes some type of blockade of North Korea, the required military buildup would entail operating expenses and have a chilling effect on world trade and financial markets.

Lives. Although executing economic sanctions against North Korea would significantly increase tension in the region, it should not have a large toll in military casualties unless the blockade leads to war. However, coercion such as economic sanctions would increase the suffering of an already beleaguered society. Insulated from the masses, Kim maintains a firm policy of isolationism and continues to espouse self-reliance while experts estimate that at least 2.5 million North Koreans died of starvation in the past decade.[106] In fact, following disastrous floods in the 1990s, the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Doctors Without Borders and Action Against Hunger protested the North Korean government's control of their relief efforts and supplies. The NGOs' objections were ignored as emergency relief supplies were diverted to the military and other government officials. As a result, the NGOs pulled out of North Korea.[107]

Risk: Will Sanctions Lead to War? Economic sanctions, specifically a naval blockade of North Korea, run a very high risk of leading to a second Korean War. North Korean press releases along with diplomatic statements have stated as much. Strategists must account for the likelihood that if Kim's regime determines its survival is at stake, it will lash out while it still can. South Korea

and China refer to the risk of war as one of the reasons they do not support this policy approach. In fact, during the 1994 nuclear crisis, Secretary of Defense Perry asked General Luck to prepare three options for force buildup and to estimate the devastation of full-scale war on the peninsula. Although some South Koreans may support the "Sunshine Policy" of engagement, others realize that one third of South Korea's 47 million people live in Seoul, less than 30 miles from the DMZ.[108]

Precedent

If the United States were able to convince its regional partners that coercive diplomacy was the best policy approach, it would establish a favorable precedent for future nonproliferation cases. In a best-case scenario, it would not only resolve the current nuclear crisis, but also establish the framework for a regional security structure for future "tough cases" unable to be resolved by regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). In contrast, if an agreement is not possible, or coercive diplomacy is applied and ultimately fails, it will simply embolden future countries weighing the cost-benefit analysis of developing nuclear weapons.

Summary

Coercive diplomacy was on the US policy option table during the 1994 nuclear crisis, but never tested multilaterally due to the bilateral breakthrough that led to the Agreed Framework. Even during the discussion phase ten years ago, China and South Korea were reluctant to pursue coercive policy development seriously. Assuming the successful herding of regional partners toward an agreed upon policy, North Korean leaders are immune to the consequences of coercion due to their insulation from the

population's strife. Furthermore, North Korea resists increased transparency and is more likely to cheat if the US puts a boot to the throat than if it put a ship full of relief supplies in port. The execution of severe coercive diplomacy to force North Korea to surrender its nuclear weapons runs a high risk of war, high risk of cheating, is not supported by two key regional partners, and thus unlikely to succeed. This leaves few palatable options available, one of which may be to strike the right balance of adequate coercion combined with attractive incentives in order to lure North Korea out of its shell. A less desirable option is the transition from diplomacy to military force, or the sledgehammer.

THE SLEDGEHAMMER

Is military force to disarm a nuclear North Korea a policy option worth considering? Last year, President Bush thought so: "I still believe this (crisis) will be solved diplomatically…. All options are on the table of course."[109] Less than one month later, he was even more open about the use of force when he stated, "If they don't work diplomatically, they'll have to work militarily."[110] Mr. Levi, of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), cautioned:

> There is not a military solution that provides the same comprehensive solution that diplomacy might. Taking out Yongbyon would not affect North Korea's highly enriched uranium program. It's very hard for us to verify how far along they are because we don't know where the uranium facilities are. That means there is no military option short of regime change that will completely remove the North Korean nuclear threat.[111]

Although a combined US-ROK force could defeat North Korea's military forces, a second Korean war would decimate the peninsula's infrastructure, negatively impact the region's economy, and cost all three countries billions of dollars and hundreds of

thousands of lives. Do the benefits of preventing North Korea from potentially threatening, using, or selling nuclear weapons outweigh the costs of devastation associated with military conflict? Can the United States justify unilateral action against North Korea if South Korea objects? I propose it currently cannot do so, but that a North Korean nuclear test or another Taepo Dong missile test over Japan would change the political situation in favor of more aggressive US policy options. This section delves into the unthinkable, a second Korean war. If the United States is determined to eliminate North Korean nuclear weapons and all forms of diplomacy fail, military force can disarm North Korea, but at an extremely high cost.

Following a brief analysis of force disposition in Northeast Asia, this section evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of using military force to achieve policy objectives and its chance for success. It evaluates potential military operations taken against North Korea with the political objective of completely, verifiably, and irreversibly disarming North Korean nuclear weapons. This objective implies North Korean regime change. The threat or actual use of surgical air strikes, special forces operations, and limited military force are valid techniques during coercive diplomacy, but are not capable of achieving the stated US policy objective of complete disarmament.

Background

It is not a coincidence that the USS Pueblo, seized in international waters on 23 January 1968, is on display near Pyongyang in the Taedong River, relatively close to where the USS General Sherman ran aground, was burned, and its crew massacred by Koreans in August 1866.[112] On the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Pueblo seizure, a North Korean official press release entitled "US

warned not to forget the lesson of the Pueblo incident" included rhetoric about the ship's historic capture and how it is now visited by "an endless stream of people."[113] When advocating a second Korean War scenario, one must not forget that North Korea is heavily armed, motivated, and fearful of a US preemptive attack.

The first Korean War, fought with antiquated weapons by today's standards, killed or wounded 900,000 Chinese, 520,000 North Koreans, and 400,000 United Nations Command soldiers. Nearly two-thirds of the 400,000 UN casualties were South Korean, along with 36,000 US troops killed in action.[114] Approximately three million Korean civilians, one-tenth of the peninsula's population, were killed, wounded, or missing because of the war.[115] US air power was particularly devastating to North Korea, and the country's military realized that anything on the surface of the earth would be destroyed. As a result, North Korea's military started digging in the 1950's and has not stopped. Approximately four thousand underground facilities (UGFs) within one hundred miles of the demilitarized zone house virtually every type of weapon in North Korea's arsenal, including aircraft, armor, command centers, and even naval forces along the coastline.[116]

Force Strengths. Seventy percent of North Korea's million-man army is garrisoned within one hundred miles of the demilitarized zone and is supported by 8,000 to 11,000 artillery pieces in hardened artillery sites (HARTS).[117] Thousands of expansive UGFs protect most of the troops, equipment, weapons, and supplies supported by five thousand metric tons of chemical agents including, nerve, choking, blister, and blood agents.[118] In addition to their large numbers and chemical weapons, North Korean troops should be considered highly motivated following

decades of political and social indoctrination, in addition to enjoying a higher quality of life than average North Korean citizens enjoy. Unlike Iraq's military, North Korea's military will fight with discipline and the esprit-de-corps that flows from defending one's homeland.

Across the DMZ, 4.5 million reservists and 37,000 US troops support South Korea's army of 672,000 men. The United States maintains roughly 100,000 troops in the Pacific Rim, mainly in Japan, and has a total force of nearly 1.4 million service members.[119] Consider the destructive potential of the military power listed in Table 2.

In time of war, the 37,000 US forces in South Korea are expected to be rapidly augmented by tens of thousands more troops. However, the timing and size of US force buildup has tremendous political and military implications. Too little or too late and North Korea may be able to achieve significant breakthroughs. Too much, too early could make North Korea feel threatened and determine it is better to strike first before a window of opportunity closes. North Korea observed and learned from US deployments during Operation Desert Storm. In May 1994, a North Korean colonel told a US officer at Panmunjom, "We are not going to let you do a buildup."[120] North Korea has the ability to monitor US operations on the peninsula that indicate intentions such as force build-ups and Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO). This monitoring ability, when combined with North Korea's heightened threat perception of a preemptive US attack, makes large-scale force movements to the peninsula similar to throwing matches into a dry powder keg.

Table 2: Northeast Asia Military Force Strength[121]

	DPRK	ROK	US	China	Japan
Total	**1,173,000**	**672,000**	**1,396,200**	**2,200,000**	**234,000**
Army	1,003,00*	560,000	482,000	1,700,000	148,300
Navy	60,000	60,000	547,136^	220,000	43,700
Air Force	110,000	52,000	374,700	420,000	42,000

Legend

* = Includes approximately 100,000 SOF troops

^ = includes 170,000 USMC troops

Objectives. What motivated North Korea to invest four decades worth of limited research and procurement assets to develop nuclear weapons? Four potential explanations are easy to remember by the terms blackmail, black market, deter, or detonate. As mentioned in a typical debate about the 1994 Agreed Framework, some argued that North Korea claimed to have nuclear weapons in order to blackmail the United States and its regional partners into providing much needed energy aid. Others refer to North Korea's prolific ballistic missile sales, drug trafficking, and counterfeiting of US currency as proof that once North Korea possessed enough nuclear weapons for its own purposes, they would likely sell nuclear weapons to terrorist organizations capable of meeting North Korea's demand for hard currency. Advocates of deterrence refer to North Korea's press releases that state North Korea had to develop nuclear weapons to deter US imperialist aggression. Last, some argue that because Kim Jong-il ultimately seeks not only his regime's survival, but also the forceful reunification of the Korean peninsula under communist rule, he could detonate nuclear weapons to achieve his political objectives.

According to multiple unclassified sources, North Korean political/military objectives are threefold: regime survival, quick peninsula reunification under a communist regime using overwhelming military force, and status as a "great and powerful nation."[122] Military planners anticipate that the start of any North Korean offensive will include insertion of one of the country's asymmetric strengths, the world's largest standing special operations forces, totaling over 100,000.[123] North Korea could attempt its own version of "shock and awe" by combining special operations force insertions under cover of an artillery barrage

capable of 500,000 rounds per hour for several hours and the use of a chemical weapons stockpile believed to be 5,000 metric tons.[124] Although obsolete compared to US-ROK weapons, North Korea's 1,600 aircraft, 2,000 tanks, and 800 ships combined with the element of surprise, could be enough to overwhelm even the most advanced military initially.[125] Realizing that Seoul has one-third of South Korea's population, it is conceivable that a concentrated North Korean attack on Seoul could destroy, if not occupy, the city's infrastructure, compelling South Korea to negotiate with Kim Jong-il following a fait accompli. Moreover, South Korea has a limited number of aerial ports and seaports capable of receiving large numbers of incoming troops or outgoing evacuees.

As obvious as it may seem, which opponent initiates hostilities dramatically impacts the conduct of the war. Knowing exactly when to increase force levels, conduct last-minute combat preparations, evacuate non-essential personnel, and strike first significantly alters the duration and conduct of the war. Troops moving forward are more exposed than troops defending well-fortified positions. If North Korea starts the war, will there be adequate strategic warning to flow into country appropriate forces? Can the United States and South Korea defend Seoul long enough to permit a shift of forces from Iraq? If US and South Korean forces start the war, how survivable are North Korean underground facilities? How much international or regional support can be expected if the US conducts another preemptive war? These are just a few of the strategic questions to answer when evaluating the ramifications of using military force to achieve North Korean nuclear disarmament. These questions demonstrate the complexity of proposing military force and fuel the debate on this policy option.

Obstacles. Warfighting in Korea is difficult for many reasons, two of which are geography and environment. A peninsula of mountains, Korea has few avenues of approach for large forces to cross the demilitarized zone. The operational significance of these two corridors, Kaeson and Chorwon, which were well used in the 1950s, is completely understood for future conflicts. Both North and South, along with the United States, grasp the significance of occupying the high ground, its corresponding fields of fire, and thus controlling the limited traversable valleys. Limited airspace and weather also present more significant problems than warfare in Iraq, for example.

North Korea has limited airspace in which to fight. The country's 74,819 square miles is 18.6 percent of that of Iraq, and is reduced even more when realizing that the majority of North Korea's forces are within one hundred miles of the demilitarized zone. Thus, the air "battlespace" is reduced to approximately 14,800 square miles or 5.5 percent of Iraq, ignoring deep-strike sorties. De-conflicting airspace slightly smaller than Mississippi that contains two to three thousand sorties per day is no small task.[126] Another obstacle can be weather. On the ground, monsoons cause severe flooding with summer monthly average rainfalls nearly ten inches, bitterly cold winters, and fog often reducing visibility.[127] In contrast, during the air-war of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 70 percent of Iraq was completely cloud free one out of every three days, and only 4 percent of sorties were scrubbed or ineffective due to bad weather.[128] Finally, if North Korea occupies Seoul, airpower's ability to perform close air support (CAS) is more restricted than in the two primary north-south corridors along the demilitarized zone. Close air support in an urban area such as Seoul

would significantly complicate operational issues such as minimizing collateral damage, positive target identification, and preventing fratricide.

Impact on North Korean Nuclear Weapons

The military force policy option provides the greatest control of North Korean nuclear weapons, but it does so at an extraordinarily high cost. If the United States determines that it cannot risk future North Korean cheating under diplomatic agreements, regime change and temporary occupation offer an alternative. In addition to the devastation of war, critics argue that military occupation of North Korea may not even achieve US policy objectives in light of intelligence failures in Iraq, resulting in the inability to locate weapons of mass destruction. Not knowing where North Korea's highly enriched uranium program and facilities are located is a debilitating limitation to quick military success. Likewise, losing tens of thousands of soldier's lives without finding a smoking gun would be everyone's worst nightmare. Despite the high cost and risk, military force provides greater transparency of North Korean nuclear weapons than a diplomatic solution.

Impact on Neighbors

Formal security alliances exist between several key Northeast Asian countries: the Japanese-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the 1953 ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty, and the 1961 Agreement between China and North Korea. The Japanese-US Defense Agreement was re-confirmed as recently as 1996.[129] Similarly, the 1966 Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and the 1991 Wartime Host Nation Support Agreement reinforced the ROK-US Alliance.[130] Beyond formal alliances, Northeast Asia has experienced globalization (increased inter-dependence) similar to

the rest of the industrialized world, which reduces the participating countries willingness to interrupt the status quo.

China. Will China provide North Korea support during a second Korean War? Second to South Korea in its unwillingness to support the use of US military force, China strongly opposes this policy option. The United States has to assume that China will not commit ground forces, or US policy makers must fundamentally reconsider the use of military force. The central question is how much support (publicly or privately) would China provide North Korea? North Korea was shrewd enough to build some of its infrastructure near the border with China. The United States must be extremely cautious in conducting operations near China's border with North Korea. China could expect to have no physical collateral damage to its property; however, the economic impacts of war, tens of thousands of refugees, and US-ROK forces near its border remain China's primary concerns.

Although China publicly supports Korean reunification, this support assumes the resulting Korean state is not anti-Chinese. In addition, China does not want the entire Korean peninsula converted to capitalism, nor would it like to have US troops near its border.[131] China's ability to influence US policy stems from more than its military strength. In 1991, the US trade deficit with China was $12.6 billion.[132] Twelve years later, it was ten times that amount, reaching $124 billion in 2003.[133] After China established trade offices in Beijing and Seoul in October 1990 and it established full diplomatic relations with South Korea in August 1992, bilateral trade steadily increased. Hitting $41.2 billion in 2002, China actually replaced the United States as South Korea's number one trading partner.[134] In comparison, even though one-half of North

Korea's total trade volume is with China, it totaled only $1.05 billion.[135]

Japan. Even though Japan would be the only regional partner not to oppose military force, it is not eager to consider its use. Japan, in range of North Korean ballistic missiles and clandestine special-forces insertions, is the likely target in a North Korean attempt to divide the Japanese-US alliance. Based upon decades of mistrust and disputes such as the Japanese colonization of Korea and North Korea's kidnappings, drug trafficking, and naval skirmishes, Japan should expect a strike by North Korea. The debate is by what and how bad the damage would be. Although some may argue that the US military buildup would be an economic boost to Japan's economy, a major war on the Korean peninsula would have disastrous effects on the region's economies.

South Korea. South Korea strongly opposes even the consideration of military force to disarm a nuclear North Korea. President Roh repeatedly has stated in public that peaceful diplomatic means must resolve the nuclear issue. Not only do younger South Koreans view the United States as the obstacle to reunification and the target of North Korean aggression, but also they understand the devastation that peninsula-wide war would cause. "The hub of Northeast Asia" is tough to market abroad if the entire peninsula is a war zone. In addition, war would obliterate South Korea's goal of becoming a top-ten economic power. How many chemical Scuds into Seoul could the US-ROK alliance absorb before the political-military relationship changed significantly? The answer is very few.

Costs

Financial. In June of 1994, South Korea conducted a large-scale civil defense exercise in the event the nuclear crisis led to war. As a result, in the two days following the 13 June 1994 exercise announcement, the Seoul stock market dropped 25 percent.[136] In any future conflict, Northeast Asia could expect catastrophic stock market drops across the region, home to approximately one-half of the world's economic output. Following the direct costs of combat operations, the United States would likely have to shoulder a significant portion of the cost of rebuilding Korea's infrastructure, both North and South. Assuming the cost of Korean reconstruction would be at least as much if not more than the cost of reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan, this figure could exceed the $87 billion authorized by Congress in early 2004.

Lives. On 19 May 1994, Secretary of Defense Perry, along with US Army Generals Shalikashvili and Luck met with President Clinton to inform him of the gravity of the situation building on the Korean peninsula. Regarding the meeting, Oberdorfer wrote:

> If war broke out…they estimated it would cost 52,000 US military casualties, killed or wounded, and 490,000 South Korean military casualties in the first ninety days, plus an enormous number of North Korean and civilian lives, at a financial outlay exceeding $61 billion, very little of which could be recouped from US allies.[137]

The casualty predictions did not improve following the first ninety days. During coercive diplomacy planning, Secretary Perry asked General Luck to estimate the damage of a full-scale war on the peninsula. According to Oberdorfer, General Luck, a veteran of Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, reported that

> Due to the lethality of modern weapons and Korea's urban environment, as many as one million people would be killed, including 80,000 to 100,000 Americans, that out-of-

> pocket costs to the United States would exceed $100 billion and the destruction of property and interruption to business activity would cost more than one trillion dollars to the countries involved and their immediate neighbors.[138]

However, the lethality of modern weapons and the US military's ability to limit collateral damage has caused some military experts such as retired Air Force Lieutenant General Thomas McInerney to argue that although a second Korean war would cause significant damage, it would not be nearly as bad as some experts predict. In an August 2003 *Wall Street Journal* opinion article, former Central Intelligence Agency Director James Woolsey and retired Lieutenant General McInerney proposed that military force is a viable option for resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis and that, in fact, "North Korea could be defeated decisively in thirty to sixty days."[139] They proposed that the much-discussed 11,000 artillery pieces, of which half can target Seoul, could be destroyed or sealed in their hardened facilities with the combination of stealth and precision-guided munitions. Citing the available infrastructure in Northeast Asia and the access to North Korean targets from the sea, they view airpower as decisive with the possibility of generating and employing, "around 4,000 sorties a day compared to 800 a day that were so effective in Iraq."[140] In addition, the threat of Marine Corps amphibious assault on both coasts of North Korea could place both Pyongyang and Wonsan at risk of rapid seizure, especially since North Korea's army mainly rests along the demilitarized zone.[141]

Recently, changes have occurred in both US military assets on the peninsula and the strategy by which to engage North Korean troops. According to an April 2004 *Aviation Week & Space Technology* article, US military planners in Korea are attempting to

take advantage of improved assets such as AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters, GPS-guided munitions, Shadow 200 unmanned aircraft, and PAC-3 ballistic missile interceptors.[142] The current Seventh Air Force Commander, Lieutenant General Trexler, who is responsible for planning and executing the air campaign in the Korean theater, commented as follows:

> There is a shift happening. The improved equipment gives us a capability to attack these enemy forces very quickly and prevent some of the mass casualties.[143]

He went on to indicate that Korea "always has to be looked at differently" from operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, not only because of North Korea's massive army, but also because North Korean artillery can, "rain havoc on a very large civilian population."[144]

Regardless of who is correct regarding the extent of damage a second Korean War would cause or how long a war would last, the United States cannot justify initiating a preemptive attack on North Korea under the current strategic situation, especially when South Korea and China are adamantly opposed to it. If South Korea strongly opposed the use of military force, it could ultimately deny the use of South Korean infrastructure to conduct US operations. This would significantly hinder the US ability to wage war against North Korea. Although it is militarily possible for the United States to defeat North Korea without conducting combat operations from South Korea, it is politically impossible to do so without destroying the US-ROK alliance.

Risk: Will War Lead to Limited Nuclear Exchange? An adversary's threat perception of its opponent is a critical factor in selecting a course of action. As such, US actions need to account for North Korea's heightened fear of US military force used to

resolve the current crisis. According to a 10 January 2003 KCNA statement, North Korea views the Bush administration as hostile toward the country, singling it out for a possible preemptive attack, to include nuclear weapons.[145] If Kim Jong-il believes that US military force is to be used to achieve regime change, why would he not use every weapon at his disposal to survive?

In *Inadvertent Escalation*, Barry Posen provided keen insight into how large-scale conventional war in Europe between the United States and the Soviet Union could have led to nuclear war.[146] Fully developing the prospects for a nuclear exchange between North Korea and the United States is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, US military force policy planning must factor in this prospect. As scary as this prospect is, maybe Kim is rational enough not to fight to the death. On 5 August 2000, a delegation of South Korean media executives dined with Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang, including Choe Hak Rae, then publisher of *Hankyoreh Shinum*, a newspaper that covered North Korea favorably. Choe asked Kim why North Korea spent so much of its scarce resources on ballistic missiles instead of social programs. Kim replied

> The missiles cannot reach the United States and if I launch them, the US would fire back thousands of missiles and we would not survive. I know that very well, but I have to let them know I have missiles. I am making them, because only then will the United States talk to me.[147]

If both the context and content of this reported quote are accurate, it indicates that Kim may be rational enough to understand the cost-benefit analysis of engaging the United States in military action. It also supports the speculated blackmail, black market, or deterrence theories for North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Precedent

US willingness to pay the high cost of war sends the strongest possible indicator of political resolve. If US leaders (the President, with adequate support from Congress) determine that North Korean nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated, the diplomatic stakes are tremendous. There is more at stake than the status of North Korea's nuclear weapons. If the United States was willing to invade Iraq yet avoids military conflict with North Korea, other countries may conclude that nuclear weapons are the key to deterring US military action. One potential benefit of the Iraq war may be that henceforth, a US threat of military force is credible enough to convince North Korea to acquiesce. Other potential benefits are lessons re-learned in verifying intelligence reports and the difficulty of building democracies to fill the void caused by regime change.

Summary

Stand-alone, limited military operations against North Korea cannot achieve US policy objectives. Regardless of technological advances in stealth, effects-based targeting, and precision-guided munitions, a second Korean War will be protracted, costly, and devastating. As to the quality of the weapons advantage that the US-ROK team enjoys over North Korea, remember Stalin's comment to Lenin regarding tanks, "Quantity has a quality all its own." No matter how much "shock and awe" rains down on the 1.1 million-man North Korean army, they are dug-in, well trained, and capable of unleashing a tremendous volume of fire upon Seoul. Under the current situation, none of the US's regional partners support military force. As such, it cannot be justified in light of the widespread destruction it would cause. Unfortunately, it also has the greatest chance of achieving the stated objective of completely,

verifiably, and irreversibly disarming North Korean nuclear weapons.

CONCLUSION

North Korea remains an enigma, and the multilateral approach is both a blessing and a curse. The blessing comes from possible increased pressure on North Korea to comply with regional demands for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear crisis. The curse is in the fact that with incentives likely to fail, a multilateral coercive approach or military force in the current strategic situation has little hope of success due primarily to a lack of regional support. Herein lays the policy challenge; if North Korea cannot be enticed, coerced, or clubbed over the head, how should the United States proceed? This chapter provides a summary of research findings and offers US policy recommendations for North Korean nuclear weapons.

Summary of Findings

The Carrot: Not Tasty Enough. The Agreed Framework was the best of only bad options available in 1994; and it failed to remove North Korea's incentive to develop nuclear weapons or to permit significant increases in transparency. A similar approach in the current situation is unlikely due to the current administration's predominant belief that North Korea cannot be trusted. Moreover, North Korea has repeatedly balked at permitting increased levels of inspections regardless of the nationality of the inspectors or the organization they represent. North Korea's refusal to accept US demands for increased transparency, and the requisite inspections, is the primary reason diplomacy will most likely fail to disarm a nuclear North Korea. An incentive-based solution would be the least expensive in the long-term and has the greatest regional

support. However, incentive-based diplomacy will not entice North Korea to surrender the nuclear weapons in which it has invested so heavily and views as the penultimate deterrent to US military force and the source of achieving "great power status."

The Stick: Too Many Hands, Wrong Target. With its low success rate, coercive diplomacy lacks the regional support necessary to conduct multilateral coercion successfully. In addition, coercion would affect the wrong target and has the same transparency problems as incentive-based diplomacy. North Korean leaders are hyper-insulated from an already suffering population. Virtually cutoff from all economic interaction with the United States, North Korea continues to receive reliable assistance from China and bilateral trade with South Korea. Unless North Korea provokes the regional powers or increases tension with brinkmanship, it is unlikely that China and South Korea would support cutting North Korea off economically, thus limiting the United States' ability to strangle North Korea.

The Sledgehammer: Potentially Effective, but Blunt and Expensive. Major military operations taken against North Korea, i.e. a second Korean War, is the policy most capable of achieving North Korean nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, it is also the most costly, lacks regional support, and places the US-ROK alliance at risk of collapse. A second Korean War also implies North Korean regime change, generates several negative consequences, and risks a limited nuclear exchange. The list of obstacles to the use of military force is long. A lack of regional support to discuss, let alone use, military force, international blowback from Iraqi pre-war intelligence failures and perceived US unilateral preemptive war, US domestic concerns with the cost of Iraqi reconstruction,

and the assured destruction of Korea's infrastructure combine to remove it as a feasible US policy option at the present time. However, a credible threat of force is crucial to successful coercive diplomacy. Moreover, the United States must still be politically and militarily ready to execute its threat if North Korea calls the bluff.

Policy Recommendations

What Price Is the United States Willing to Pay? Anyone making policy recommendations for North Korea should remember the saying, "Anyone who claims to be an expert on North Korea is either a liar or a fool." The United States successfully took the first step by achieving regional agreement for its policy objective: complete, verifiable, and irreversible North Korean nuclear disarmament. The next most important step for US policymakers is to answer the second question Richard Armitage's working group asked in 1999, "What price is the United States willing to pay to disarm North Korea?"[148] If the answer to this question does not include options on the far right end of the spectrum of influence (Figure 1) then the United States should not pursue coercive diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy assumes a credible threat of military force, sometimes combined with incentives, to achieve political objectives. To threaten North Korea with the use of military force, either limited strikes, or major combat operations, and then not follow through would be worse than simply accepting a nuclear North Korea and continuing deterrence. If a second Korean War is rejected as an acceptable policy to disarm North Korean nuclear weapons and incentive-based diplomacy fails, the United States should attempt to mitigate further nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia while continuing to deter North Korea from invading the South. Although inexpensive in the near

term, accepting a nuclear-armed North Korea simply postpones a difficult decision that will be more costly to resolve in the future and places US vital interests in Northeast Asia at an unacceptably high level of risk in the present.

Shift to Coercive Diplomacy and Prepare for War. Each policy option alone will fail to disarm North Korean nuclear weapons. Currently, the only politically feasible alternative is the judicious use of just enough stick to convince North Korea to take the carrots offered before the deal expires. However, time is on the side of North Korea. North Korea can work quietly while observing the recent South Korean opposition party's success in the April elections and the upcoming US presidential elections in November 2004. Each passing day allows North Korea to pursue nuclear weapons without international inspections, providing it the opportunity to build an even greater deterrent.

The United States must convince China and South Korea that disarming North Korea is a vital interest to not only the United States, but also Northeast Asia and that if not addressed soon, nuclear proliferation throughout Asia will become the world's concern. The six party talks should not continue indefinitely without tangible results. A tightly held meeting between Kim Jong-il and Chinese leaders, including President Jintao, closely followed Vice President Cheney's April 2004 visit to Northeast Asia and Beijing. The South Korean press reported that China stressed the importance of continuing the six-party talks and that Kim Jong-il should be more flexible in negotiating with the United States.[149] An allegation also circulates that China gave North Korea economic assistance for simply traveling to Beijing and publicly stating that it would continue meaningful dialogue at the six party talks.

Multilateral diplomacy is the proper path, but it should be walked briskly in order to determine its chance for success without allowing North Korea unlimited time to build more nuclear weapons.

Regardless of the outcome of the November 2004 United States election, the next administration should decide if it wants to shift from talks to coercion. It is vital that this critical foreign policy decision be thoroughly vetted with a wide range of experts, inputs, and policy options, including a review of the Perry Report and Armitage recommendations. Aggressive US policy in Northeast Asia could easily escalate to a second Korean War, and as a result, it is necessary to measure both Congressional and public support. If Congress and the American people believe North Korean nuclear weapons are a threat to US vital interests, then they should realize the policy's potential costs. Whatever the policy debate outcome, a clear and credible policy should be ready for implementation immediately following the Presidential election, since delays favor North Korea. If the decision is to pursue coercive diplomacy, the next step is to reaffirm precisely what to demand of North Korea.

Due to consensus with regional partners, it is likely the United States will continue to demand North Korea's complete, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament, and not publicly advocate North Korean regime change. The next step would be to develop and communicate a credible threat based upon realistic military capabilities within the constraints of very limited regional support. For example, in order to conduct operations from Japan in preparation for limited South Korean support it is necessary to draft contingency plans. Actual force deployments into the region, similar to Pacific Theater buildups prior to operations in Iraq, to deter North Korean opportunistic aggression, must back the threat

of military force. However, the timing and extent of regional force buildup to support a threat requires careful planning and execution. Operations in Iraq placed a tremendous strain on US forces, military logistics, and public support. For example, US troops stationed in Korea are planned to deploy to Iraq. Likewise, increasing troop strengths in the Korean Theater heightens tension not only with North Korea, but also South Korea, China, and to some extent Japan. However, if properly executed, these buildups could accomplish three objectives. First, they would support the threat of using force. Second, they would be better prepared to conduct combat operations either to demonstrate US resolve or to counteract North Korean aggression. Finally, their redeployment out of the theater becomes bargaining chips for US policymakers negotiating the details of any potential agreement.

In communicating the threat of military action to North Korea, the United States should invite as many senior North Korean leaders as possible to review US capabilities in South Korea and force demonstrations in the United States. The purpose of these displays would be to demonstrate clearly that the threat of US military force is credible. Furthermore, that US forces employed on the Korean peninsula would be overwhelming, lethal, precise, and victorious. The format for these military demonstrations could be similar to Air Power Demonstrations previously conducted near Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada for high-ranking US leaders such as members of Congress and all new flag rank officers in the US military.

After communicating a credible threat, the United States should offer incentives that allay North Korea's fears and meet its dire energy and food needs. Providing incentives, that some refer to as an "exit ramp," allows Kim Jong-il a face-saving way out of his

nuclear dilemma. This is especially important when dealing with an insecure leader of a failed state who aspires to be a "great power," especially when Korean culture places great emphasis on pride. Although President Bush has stated he will not permit America to be blackmailed, when faced with either a second Korean War or accepting a nuclear North Korea, providing incentives may appear easier to swallow when offered after the threat of force. Future incentive decisions should consider the pros and cons of continuing construction of the 1994 Agreed Framework's two light-water reactors or scrapping these programs for alternative energy sources. Since North Korea objected to South Korean workers being permitted inside North Korea to build the light-water reactors, China could potentially assist North Korea in rebuilding its electrical infrastructure or an alternative energy source using South Korean and Japanese funding. Finally, the United States must determine a deadline for North Korea's compliance and be militarily and politically prepared to execute its declared threat.

US policy will need to be "sold" both internationally and domestically. Absent a significant threat, the average American largely ignores US foreign policy. The war in Iraq increased concern over intelligence accuracy and the viability of preemptive wars in pursuit of the "Axis of Evil." United Nations support for either coercion or military force to disarm North Korea will be more difficult to sell than the failed attempt to rally support for the Iraq War. A Chinese veto of any proposed resolutions condemning North Korea or a call for an aggressive policy that it does not support is almost a certainty. Domestically, building support for a potential second Korean war would be difficult at best. The average American has little interest in foreign policy and does not perceive

North Korea as a threat to Homeland Security. If a North Korean nuclear weapon sold to Al Queda and detonated at the Superbowl had Kim Jong-il's fingerprints on it, America would mobilize. Short of that, many Americans wonder why the United States should risk killing tens of thousands of people to remove a threat that young South Koreans fail to perceive. It is necessary to use credible evidence of North Korea's record of illicit activities and human rights violations to inform the American people and the international community of the repressive nature of Kim Jong-il's regime. Although Iraqi pre-war intelligence tarnished the United States' reputation, it must pursue international and domestic support by convincing people that North Korea does, in fact, have nuclear weapons and that this is unacceptable.

If both incentive and coercive diplomacy fail to disarm North Korean nuclear weapons, the steps taken during coercive diplomacy will better position the United States to conduct military operations at the time and place of its choosing to disarm North Korea. Ideally, this would occur with at least South Korea's tacit support and China's promise to remain neutral. However, military planners should prepare for the worst, and have contingency plans that assume no permitted offensive operations from South Korea and that China could possibly provide North Korea limited assistance short of military force. Among the myriad of considerations, strategists should avoid creating situations that are likely to trigger North Korean employment of nuclear weapons. They also need to determine how best to convince senior North Korean military leaders that the outcome of war is not the question, but rather how much destruction they wish to endure. Psychological operations always play a role in military conflict, but the potential impact of

exposing Kim Jong-il's leadership failures, repressive actions, and economic incompetence could convince North Korean military leaders that the Libyan model is a better alternative than Iraq.

The two alternatives available if diplomacy fails are both unattractive. The United States, however, should not shy away from protecting its vital interests because a potentially effective policy is costly. If after being informed of the potential costs of military force, Congress and the American people still support the US objective of complete, verifiable, and irreversible North Korean nuclear disarmament, the United States should act resolutely. In addition, US diplomats should make every effort to convince our regional partners that the benefits of supporting US and regional policy goals outweigh the costs of opposing them. At the end of the day, containing a nuclear-armed North Korea is better than a second Korean War. Of course, policy makers want to avoid having to present the President with this stark choice. But if diplomacy fails to disarm a nuclear North Korea, advisers must be clear which of the two choices is preferable.

NOTES

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[3] Alexander L. George, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 7.

[4] Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas* (Indianapolis: Basic Books, 2001), 315.

[5] Congress, House, Asia-Pacific Subcommittee on International Relations, testimony by Admiral Fargo, Commander Pacific Command, 26 June 2003.

[6] Office of the Secretary of Defense*, Proliferation: Threat and Response* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, January 2001), 7, www.defenselink.mil. (accessed April 2004).

[7]www.worldbank.org, www.cia.gov/publications/factbook, www.4Janes.com, and NS4207 class notes of Professor Kim Deok Yeong, visiting Professor from the Korean National Defense University.

[8] Mr. Shingo Nishimua, interview by Eric Weiner (07 March 2003), *National Public Radio Transcript*.

[9] *Proliferation: Threat and Response*, 11.

[10] Ibid.

[11] The Axis of Evil reference occurred in the 2002 State of the Union address. Policy preference for action versus inaction comes from the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, December 2002, 1. President Bush's distaste for Kim Jong-il was reported by *Washington Post's* Bob Woodward from a summer 2002 interview quoted in *The CQ Researcher*, 13, no. 14, (11 April 2003), 324.

[12] George Bush, speech to NDU, 11 February 2004.

[13] Kim, "North Korea," 7.

[14] Mary H. Cooper, "North Korean Crisis," *The CQ Researcher* (11 April 2003): 333.

[15] Congress, Senate, Governmental affairs subcommittee on Financial Management and the Budget and International Security, Testimony by William Bach, Department of State, Director, Office of African, Asian and European Affairs Bureau (22 May 2003), usembassy.state.gov/ posts/pk1/wwwho3052208.html. (accessed April 2004).

[16] Kim, "North Korea," 8.

[17] Ibid., 7.

[18] William J. Perry, "North Korea: The Real Nuclear Crisis," Speech at Monterey Institute of International Studies, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, (16 December 2003).

[19] This fact is not meant to be overly incriminating. North Korea was the first country that the IAEA demanded to submit to special inspections.

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[21] "Nuclear Confrontation with North Korea: Lessons of the 1994 Crisis for Today," Daniel Poneman, former Special Assistant to the President of the United States for Nonproliferation and Export Control Policy, Remarks made during a Nautilus Seminar (20 March 2003), www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/agreedFramework/1994Crisis.html (accessed April 2004).

[22] While the military strike briefings were widely reported, the fact that the commander of US Forces Korea, General Luck, was preparing for a Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) was not widely reported. See Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Indianapolis: Basic Books, 2001), 326.

[23] Alexander L. George, "The Need for Influence Theory and Actor-Specific Behavioral Models of Adversaries," *Comparative Strategy* 22 (December 2003): 471.

[24] For details of the Agreed Framework, refer to Richard Armitage, "A Comprehensive Approach to North Korea by Richard Armitage," in David Albright and Kevin O'Neill, ed. *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle* (Washington, DC: ISIS Reports, 2000), 315.

[25] Albright and O'Neill, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle*, 44.

[26] Ibid.

[27] US State Department officials interview by the author, Washington, DC, 25 August 2003.

[28] David Albright, 2001 speech "Ensuring Nuclear Transparency on the Korean Peninsula: What is an Adequate Approach?" 59, www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/monitoringVerification/index.html. (accessed April 2004).

[29] Dr. Han, a professor at the Korea National Defense University, was a senior South Korean staff member who participated in the JNCC, a Principal Assistant to the Korean Minister of Defense in 1993, and a visiting fellow to the RAND Corporation.

[30] Yong-Sup Han, "North Korean Behavior in Nuclear Negotiations," *The Nonproliferation Review* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 51.

[31] Ibid., 53.

[32] The term "gifts" jokingly refers to events such as missile test firings and other provocative actions North Korean does to embarrass South Korea.

[33] David A. Albright, "North Korea's Current and Future Plutonium and Nuclear Weapon Stocks," ISIS Brief (15 January 2003), www.isis-online.org/publications/dprk/currentandfutureweaponsstocks.html. (accessed April 2004).

[34] Jim Yardley, "Kim in Beijing but Nowhere to be Seen," *New York Times,* 21 April 2004.

[35] Michael O'Hanlon and Mike Mochizuki, *Crisis on the Korean Peninsula* (New York: Brookings, 2003), 33. Kim Jong-il was last seen at a 12 February 2003 meeting with visiting Russian dignitaries and was not seen again in public until a 3 April 2003 military ceremony. US operations began in Iraq on 20 March 2003.

[36] James Woolsey, remarks during speech given as part of Secretary of the Navy, Guest Lecture Series, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 21 August 2003.

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[38] Robinson Noland and Li, "The Economics of Korean Reunification," as found in Susan F. Bryant*, Beyond the Sunshine Policy: An Argument in Favor of Continued US Military Presence in Northeast Asia*, Institute for National Security Studies Occasional Paper 47 (USAF Academy, Colorado Springs: November, 2002).

[39] www.iaea.org/about/mission.html. (accessed April 2004).

[40] Ibid.

[41] Albright and O'Neill, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle*, 257.

[42] Ibid., 245.

[43] Ibid., 246.

[44] Yong-Sup Han, "North Korean Behavior in Nuclear Negotiations," *The Nonproliferation Review* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 45.

[45] Albright and O'Neill, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle,* 9.

[46] Ibid, 265.

[47] David Albright, "Ensuring Nuclear Transparency on the Korean Peninsula: What is an Adequate Approach?" 59 (2001), www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/monitoringVerification/index.html. (accessed April 2004).

[48] Ibid, 62.

[49] Seongwhun Cheon, "North Korea's Nuclear Problem: Political Implications and Inspection Formats," 27 January 2003, US-DPRK Next Step Workshop, Nautilus Institute, Washington, DC.

[50] Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas* (Indianapolis: Basic Books, 2001), 349. Cited text is both quotations and the conversation's context as written in Oberdorfer's book.

[51] Kongdan Oh Hassig, "Confronting North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions: US Policy Options and Regional Implications," *Institute for Defense Analyses Paper P-3831* (September 2003): 14.

[52] Ibid., 15.

[53] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 319.

[54] Amy E. Smithson, "North Korea: A Case in Progress," in Thomas Bernauer and Dieter Ruloff, ed. *The Politics of Positive Incentives in Arms Control*, quoting Berry and Lee, (1995), 82.

[55] Yoo Dong-ho, "6 in 10 Koreans Back US Military Presence: Nearly Half Say US Biggest Barrier to Unification," *Korea Times,* 23 February 2004. According to a *Korea Times* Poll of 1,000 South Koreans, 46.3% picked the United States as the largest barrier to unification. The United States as a target from Kongdan Hassig article, September 2003

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[57] Kyung-ho Kim, "Hyundai's Slush Fund Probe Expands," *The Korea Herald,* 8 July 2003.

[58] Don Oberdorfer summarizes this ROK domestic political scandal in *The Two Koreas*, 376-382.

[59] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 412.

[60] Albright and O'Neill, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle,* 189.

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Albright and O'Neill, *Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle,* 315.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 318.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid., 324.

[73] Albright and O'Neill, 308.

[74] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 316.

[75] Ibid., 318.

[76] Joseph Khan, "North Korea Rejects US Demand to Scrap its Nuclear Programs," *New York Times,* 28 March 2004, 5.

[77] George, "The Need for Influence Theory and Actor-Specific Behavioral Models of Adversaries."

[78] "Profile: Kim Jong-il," *BBC News* (31 July 2003), news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1907197.htm. (accessed April 2004).

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[85] Madeline Albright, "Nuclear Nightmare: Understanding North Korea," interview by Discovery Channel Spotlight television show, 6 August 2003. Also reported by Peter Maas, "The Last Emperor," *New York Times*, 19 October 2003.

[86] George, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 7.

[87] George, "The Need for Influence Theory and Actor-Specific Behavioral Models of Adversaries," 464.

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[89] "The Invisible Exodus: North Koreans in the People's Republic of China," *A Human Rights Watch Report* 14, no. 8 (November 2002), http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/northkorea/norkor1102.pdf. (accessed April 2004).

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[91] Cooper, "North Korean Crisis," 334.

[92] Peter Maas, "The Last Emperor," *New York Times,* 19 October 2003.

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[97] "China And The North Korean Nuclear Issue," www.nti.org/db/china/koreapos.htm, updated last on 25 June 2003, (accessed July 28, 2003). Article also reported that in late February 2003, two high level DPRK groups visiting Beijing were treated coldly and told, "stop

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[98] "The Invisible Exodus: North Koreans in the People's Republic of China," *A Human Rights Watch Report* 14, no. 8 (November 2002), http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/northkorea/norkor1102.pdf (accessed April 2004).

[99] Drohan, *Effects, Targets, and Tools,* 43.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Kim, "North Korea," 7.

[102] T. J. Pempel, remarks during a briefing given at University of San Francisco, "North Korea's Nuclear Crisis," 2 April 2004. TJ Pempel is the director of the Institute of East Asian Studies and Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Berkely. North Korea allowed some of the abductees to return to Japan for visitation under an agreement they would be returned to the DPRK. Five abductees were not returned to North Korea, and this is a source of tension between the two countries.

[103] Ibid. Also Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 319. He wrote that during the 1994 crisis, Japan told the United States that they may not be able to cut off Korean sympathizers funds estimated at $600 million annually.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Jong-Heon Lee, "Analysis: N. Korea Relies on China," *United Press International,* 23 February 2004, www.washtimes.com/upi-breaking/20040223-043834-110r.htm. (accessed April 2004).

[106] Tom O'Neill, "Dangerous Divide," *National Geographic* 204, no. 1 (July 2003): 18.

[107] North Korean defector, "Nuclear Nightmare: Understanding North Korea," interview by Discovery Channel Spotlight television show, 06 August 2003.

[108] www.janes.com (accessed April 2004).

[109] George Bush, quoted by Cooper, "North Korean Crisis," 328. President Bush's comment made on 7 February 2003.

[110] Ibid., President Bush's comment made on 3 March 2003.

[111] Cooper, "North Korean Crisis," 330.

[112] USS General Sherman sources: www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/sherman.htm (accessed April 2004), Library of Congress Studies, and Cooper, "North Korean Crisis. Ship was dispatched to Asia to protect US interests.

[113] "US Warned Not To Forget Lesson From The Pueblo Incident," 23 January 2002, http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm. (accessed April 2004).

[114] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 9. Also, Kenneth Jost, "Future of Korea: Chronology," *CQ Researcher* (19 May 2000): 435. CQ Researcher's Chronology stated that more than 54,000 US troops were killed in action in Korea.

[115] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 10.

[116] "US Warned Not To Forget Lesson From The Pueblo Incident," 23 January 2002, http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm. (accessed April 2004).

[117] www.4janes. (accessed April 2004).

[118] US Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Situation on the Korean Peninsula 2000," Report to Congress, 12 September 2000, www.usinfo.state.gov/regional/ea/easec/korearpt.htm. (accessed April 2004).

[119] www.4janes. (accessed April 2004).

[120] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 326.

[121] Military data from Janes Country Executive Summaries. US data pulled from each services online personnel statistics, 2004. DPRK has over 100,000 Special Operations Forces (SOF). 170,000 US Marines are included in the US Navy force strength.

[122] See, for example, Janes.com, FAS.org (Federation of American Scientists), and US Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Situation on the Korean Peninsula 2000," Report to Congress, (12 September 2000), www.usinfo.state.gov/regional/ea/easec/korearpt.htm. (accessed April 2004).

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[126] Personal experience from serving in the Air Operations Center, Osan Air Base, ROK, 2003.

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[136] Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 322.

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